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A compressed View of the Religious Principles and Practices of the Age; or, a Trial of the Chief Spirits that are in the World, by the Standard of the Scriptures; attempted

IN

EIGHT SERMONS

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

IN THE YEAR MDCCCXIX,

AT THE

LECTURE

FOUNDED BY ✓

THE LATE REV. JOHN BAMPTON, M. A. *Lecture*

CANON OF SALISBURY. *1819*

BY ✓

HECTOR DAVIES MORGAN, M. A.

OF TRINITY COLLEGE; MINISTER OF CASTLE HEDINGHAM,
ESSEX; AND CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD KENYON.

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1819.



SERMON I.

INTRODUCTION.

1 JOHN iv. 1.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

The prevalence of error being the fulfilment of prophecy, affords no just objection to the divine origin of Christianity. I. The universality of error recognized in the Apostolical writings; which contain neither excuse for the practice of it, nor promise of exemption from its power, but recommend constant vigilance and precaution. II. The means of avoiding error are, under certain restrictions, Reason, Tradition, Inspiration—Paramount authority of the Scriptures; proper dispositions for studying and applying them with effect, and consequences of neglecting those dispositions.—III. Plan of the following Lectures proposed, and objections anticipated.

SERMON II.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE UNITARIANS COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

2 PET. ii. 1.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily

shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Inferences from the varieties of opinion concerning the person of Christ, and from the language applied to him by the Apostles and Evangelists.—Doctrines of the Unitarians, as explained by Belsham, Estlin, Carpenter, and the Editors of the “Improved Version,” compared with the Scriptures. 1. The Unity of God. 2. The Person of Christ; the Incarnation and miraculous conception. 3. The Office of Christ. 4. The Atonement. 5. The Intercession of Christ. 6. The nature and office of the Holy Spirit. 7. Original Sin. 8. Inspiration of the Scriptures. 9. Eternity of punishment: the Devil: the holy Angels. 10. Summary of Scriptural doctrines. 11. Summary of Unitarian Doctrines.

“The greatest obligation which can possibly be conferred upon them is . . . the ‘exhibition’ of their principles in their ‘true colours.’ Grant them this, and you grant them every thing. If the Unitarian doctrine, cleared from all fallacy, and exhibited to the world in its true light, will not stand its ground; if it will not, like the Gospel, make its way, and triumph over all opposition by its own invincible energy, it must be given up. If when weighed in the balances it shall be found wanting, let it be rejected as worthless dross.” *Belsham’s Letter to the Bishop of London*, p. 83.

SERMON III.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE MODERN CALVINISTS COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

ACTS xx. 27—30.

I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of

God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Expedience of a right interpretation of the Scriptures, and the offence of perverting them.—Calvinistic doctrines, as explained by Williams, Scott, Vaughan, and Simeon, compared with the Scriptures. I. Original Sin. II. Free Will. III. Grace. 1. What Calvinists do not hold concerning grace. 2. Grace a living principle, of indispensable necessity, conferred by an act of sovereignty. 3. Special grace. 4. Conversion. 5. Regeneration. 6. Indefectible grace and final perseverance. 7. Grace, in what sense irresistible. 8. Grace how sensible. Experiences. IV. Justification by grace. 1. Justification a sovereign act of God. 2. Justification by faith without works. 3. The faith which justifies. 4. Primary and final justification. V. General and particular redemption. 1. Dr. Williams's view of Predestination without Reprobation. 2. Mr. Vaughan's Defence and Maintenance of the Doctrine of Reprobation.—Texts opposed to Calvinistic doctrines.—Important concessions of Calvinists.—Note on their practical preaching.

“ We require nothing of our opponents beyond a fair
 “ discrimination. Let them state the censurable tenets, bring
 “ clear evidence against the accused; and, having proved
 “ them guilty, proceed to pass sentence upon them: but
 “ surely it is not candid to conclude under one general sen-
 “ tence so large and multifarious a body of men as are now

“ called ‘ the Calvinists,’ making them all accountable for
 “ the faults of some individuals, and to class among them all
 “ the evangelical Clergy and their congregations. But, I
 “ retract :—it is not so much in many instances the want of
 “ candour and equity, as the want of information.” *Scott’s*
Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism, vol. i. p. 93.

SERMON IV.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE ROMANISTS COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

1 TIM. iv. 1, 2, 3.

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times
 some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing
 spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypo-
 crisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from
 meats, which God hath created to be received with
 thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

Corruption of the spirituality of the Christian religion foretold. Doctrines of the Romanists explained by De-
 lahogue, Berington, Gandolphy, and Eustace, compared
 with the Scriptures. 1. The authority of the Scriptures
 and of tradition. 2. The infallibility of the Church.
 3. Privileges of the Church of Rome. 4. Titles and
 powers of the Pope. 5. Celibacy of the Priesthood.
 6. The seven Sacraments. 7. Transubstantiation, Com-
 munion in one kind, and the Sacrifice of the Mass.
 8. The Sacrament of Penance, Contrition, Confession,
 and Satisfaction. 9. Indulgences. 10. Purgatory, and
 prayers for the Dead. 11. Invocation of Saints. 12.
 Relics, &c. 13. Pomp of Service. 14. Authority of
 the Pope in secular affairs. 15. Mr. Eustace’s view of
 the religion of Italy.

“ I state in distinct propositions the articles of belief as
 “ briefly, but as comprehensively as may be : and these pro-
 “ positions I generally take from a small tract, entitled
 “ ‘ Roman Catholic Principles,’ published anonymously to-
 “ wards the close of the reign of Charles II. This I did,
 “ because those principles, a few clauses excepted, are drawn
 “ up with great precision ; and because, in stating points of
 “ religious belief, I feel a predilection for whatever bears the
 “ stamp of age. Antiquity is the badge of our faith. In any
 “ other view, as the Catholic creed in all its articles is clearly
 “ defined, and is as unchangeable as it has been unchanged,
 “ it mattered not whence the propositions were taken.” *Be-*
rrington's Introduction, p. iii.

SERMON V.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE NONCONFORMISTS COMPARED
 WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

1 Cor. xi. 19.

*For there must be also heresies among you, that they which
 are approved may be made manifest among you.*

The violation of Christian unity foretold.—The prin-
 ciples of Nonconformists, as explained by Winter, Con-
 der, Bass, Fielding, and in the “ Life of a Dissenting
 “ Minister,” compared with the Scriptures. 1. The
 right of private judgment and unlimited inquiry in reli-
 gion. 2. National establishments for religion. 3. The
 nature of ecclesiastical unity. 4. Ministerial authority.
 5. Misapprehension of Matt. xx. 25—28. 6. Aposto-
 lical succession. 7. Orders of ministry. 8. Election
 of Ministers, and right of the people in the administra-
 tion of ecclesiastical affairs.—Independence of the pri-
 mitive Churches, and voluntary nature of Christian
 communion. 9. Baptism. 10. Confirmation. 11. The

Supper of the Lord. 12. The doctrine of the Sacraments.

“ The liberal spirit of the times has encouraged coalition among different denominations of Christians in enlightened efforts of benevolence. This coalition cannot but be attended with favourable effects, where the members of each denomination are well acquainted with the ground on which its own distinguishing views and practices are assumed. But when that ground has little if at all occupied the attention, the cooperation tends not to the establishment of each, but to the establishment of that which is most generally supported and most extensively patronized, and to the proportionate diminution of the rest. And it is to be observed, that the enlargement alluded to is not that which arises from the dissemination of knowledge, but that which is occasioned by the neglect of inquiry.”
Winter's Pastoral Letters, Pref. p. viii.

SERMON VI.

THE MANNERS OF THE AGE COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

2 TIM. iii. 4, 5.

Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

Triumphs of Christianity.—Its failures foretold, especially in 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. I. Inquiry naturally suggested by this prophecy; of which the terms may be resolved into a love of pleasure, and a zeal for the form of godliness.—Under what restrictions the prophecy may be supposed to be fulfilled. II. The prophecy applied, and the application confirmed by specific instances of conduct not conformable with the Scriptural rules. 1. The

degeneracy of the female character. 2. Frivolity, luxury, extravagance, and insolvency. 3. Debauchery. 4. Juvenile delinquency. 5. Inhumanity. 6. Perjury, and the spirit of our laws. 7. Increase of crimes. 8. Other circumstances in the character of the times.—Alleged excuses and palliations inadequate.—Promises of hope.—Conclusion.

SERMON VII.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

1 THESS. v. 21.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Recapitulation.—Present exigencies of the Church of England. I. Scriptural foundation of the doctrines of the Church of England. 1. The being and attributes of God. 2. The Trinity in Unity. 3. The Divinity and Incarnation of Christ. 4. His Atonement. 5. His descent into hell. 6. His resurrection, ascension, and return to judgment. 7. The Holy Spirit. 8. Original sin. 9. Necessity of spiritual assistance. 10. Justification. 11. Works done before the grace of Christ. 12. Salvation only in Christ. 13. Faith and Works. II. Moral doctrines of the Church of England. 1. No works of supererogation. 2. Relative duties. 3. Political principles. III. Ecclesiastical polity of the Church of England. 1. Definition of the Church, and nature and extent of its authority in respect of ceremonies. 2. Excommunication. 3. Orders of Ministry. 4. Celibacy, ministrations, and character of the Clergy. 5. Sacraments. 6. Baptism. 7. The Supper of the Lord. 8. The Liturgy.

SERMON VIII.

CONCLUSION.

EPHES. iv. 15.

But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

The interest which St. Paul took in the concerns of the Church of Ephesus. I. Paraphrase of Ephes. iv. 1—16. II. Enlargement of the several arguments of the Apostle. 1. Unity of spirit. 2. Form of the Christian Ministry. 3. Offices of the Ministry. 4. Settledness of faith the end of ministerial order. 5. Christian liberality. 6. Enlargement of the Church. III. Importance of speaking the truth in love. 1. As a measure of conciliation among professing Christians. 2. As the only method of propagating the Gospel. 3. Applied to the doctrine and conduct of the younger Clergy. —Conclusion.

EXTRACT

FROM

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN BAMPTON,

CANON OF SALISBURY.

—“ I give and bequeath my Lands and
“ Estates to the Chancellor, Masters, and Scho-
“ lars of the University of Oxford for ever, to
“ have and to hold all and singular the said
“ Lands or Estates upon trust, and to the in-
“ tents and purposes hereinafter mentioned ;
“ that is to say, I will and appoint that the
“ Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford
“ for the time being shall take and receive all
“ the rents, issues, and profits thereof, and (after
“ all taxes, reparations, and necessary deduc-
“ tions made) that he pay all the remainder to
“ the endowment of eight Divinity Lecture
“ Sermons, to be established for ever in the said
“ University, and to be performed in the man-
“ ner following :

“ I direct and appoint, that, upon the first
“ Tuesday in Easter Term, a Lecturer be yearly
“ chosen by the Heads of Colleges only, and by
“ no others, in the room adjoining to the Print-
“ ing-House, between the hours of ten in the
“ morning and two in the afternoon, to preach
“ eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, the year fol-
“ lowing, at St. Mary’s in Oxford, between the
“ commencement of the last month in Lent
“ Term, and the end of the third week in Act
“ Term.

“ Also I direct and appoint, that the eight
“ Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be preached
“ upon either of the following Subjects—to con-
“ firm and establish the Christian Faith, and to
“ confute all heretics and schismatics—upon the
“ divine authority of the holy Scriptures—upon
“ the authority of the writings of the primitive
“ Fathers, as to the faith and practice of the pri-
“ mitive Church—upon the Divinity of our Lord
“ and Saviour Jesus Christ—upon the Divinity
“ of the Holy Ghost—upon the Articles of the
“ Christian Faith, as comprehended in the
“ Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

“ Also I direct, that thirty copies of the eight
“ Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be always

“ printed, within two months after they are
“ preached, and one copy shall be given to the
“ Chancellor of the University, and one copy to
“ the Head of every College, and one copy to
“ the Mayor of the city of Oxford, and one
“ copy to be put into the Bodleian Library ; and
“ the expence of printing them shall be paid
“ out of the revenue of the Land or Estates
“ given for establishing the Divinity Lecture
“ Sermons ; and the Preacher shall not be paid,
“ nor be entitled to the revenue, before they
“ are printed.

“ Also I direct and appoint, that no person
“ shall be qualified to preach the Divinity Lec-
“ ture Sermons, unless he hath taken the de-
“ gree of Master of Arts at least, in one of the
“ two Universities of Oxford or Cambridge ;
“ and that the same person shall never preach
“ the Divinity Lecture Sermons twice.”



INTRODUCTION.

1 JOHN iv. 1.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

THE multiplied divisions of the Christian Church, and the diversified expositions of the Christian Scriptures, have afforded an occasion of perplexity to them that are weak in faith, and of premature triumph and exultation to the rash and inconsiderate unbeliever. The one denies that the truth can be found in the assumed variableness of divine revelation, and the other is without hope of discovering that settled standard of doctrine, by which he is anxious to regulate the profession of his faith. Both agree in an opinion which seems to result

naturally from a cursory and superficial view of the question, that a religion, which issued from God, and is designed for the present instruction and the final salvation of mankind, would have been received with holy deference, and not have been altered by men to whom it came, and would have been preserved from all material error by God, from whom it proceeded. They both overlook the weakness and corruption of the vessels to which the heavenly treasure has been committed; they reflect not upon the state of the world, upon the interests, the passions, the pride, and the prejudices, which this religion was intended to counteract and oppose; they examine not the prophecies which from the beginning have spoken of the infirmities which this religion should exhibit, and of the trials which it should encounter in the appointed theatre of its probation.

If it were possible to have no experience of the vanity of human reason, and no sense of the imbecility and inconstancy of human virtue; if the truths of the Christian revelation, and its distinguishing precept of mu-

tual love could be proclaimed to men in a state of moral perfection; if they should be informed that the duty is illustrated by frequent allusions to the divine benevolence, that the doctrine flows from the source of infinite wisdom, and that both are sanctioned and recommended by the most powerful and affecting obligations; if, at the same time, the intimations of prophecy should be suppressed, and they should be left to form their own conclusions of the success or the failure of this religion from an abstract view of its intrinsic merit;—if hearers possessing these qualifications, or placed under these circumstances, could be found, they would have no hesitation in declaring, that the Christian religion would be received by all men, that it would be practised by all men, and render their dwellings a sanctuary of truth, and love, and peace. But when we reflect upon what passes within our own hearts and before our eyes, when we unfold the vision and the prophecy which represent the corruption of truth, the distractions of charity, and the oppositions of worldly interest,

however we may deprecate the fulfilment of the prediction, we can find no just exception upon the event. We cannot dispute the divine authority of a scheme, because it has not done what it never professed to do, because it has not invariably nor universally influenced and improved the affections and conduct of mankind.

Let therefore the unbeliever cease to triumph in the corruptions of the Christian Church; and let the faithful have consolation in the unfailing living evidence which the gradual fulfilment of prophecy is every day bearing to the truth. The persecutions, the apostasies, the heresies and schisms of the Church, every thing which has brought disgrace upon the Christian name where it is known, or obstructed its progress where it is not known, have been foretold from the beginning. The predictions of failure have been consolidated with the articles of our faith and the motives of our obedience, and the one can hardly be received where the other are unknown. The policy of the human philosopher might have led him to conceal the futility of his endeavours, or his

ambition might have prevented him from anticipating such futility; but the Christian Teacher, with the wisdom, ingenuousness, and truth, which mark his character, hath not feared to foretell the inefficacy of his doctrine, and hath left a testimony to all nations, of the persecutions and trials which should form the edifying discipline of his Church.

I. There is no man so void of experience, or so partial in his estimate of human frailty, as to doubt the prevalence of error in the world. It exists according to the prophecy, and in every variety of shape does it arrest our attention. It assumes the robe of an angel of light, and men must be wise as serpents, who would avoid its contaminating embrace. It entwines itself in our hearts and affections, it embarrasses our faculties and judgment, and penetrates the most secret recesses of the soul. It meets the hermit in his cell, and excites the evil communications of social festivity; it obscures the midnight lamp of the student, and falters on the lips of the preacher and the missionary. If we retire from the world,

our hearts will feel and betray its influence, nor shall we find exemption in the pursuit of the purest pleasures, in the practice of the most exalted virtues, in the contemplation of the profoundest systems of philosophy, or in the converse of the wisest, and best, and holiest of men.

It is to the consciousness of this universal prevalence of error that we must attribute the frequent cautions and admonitions of the sacred writers, even when the simplest truths and the most obvious virtues are concerned. "Take heed that no man deceive you." "Be not deceived." "Let no man deceive you with vain words^a." Such exhortations imply both the existence of erroneous principles, and the power and duty of avoiding them. While we are in the world, the suggestions of our own hearts, or the evil communications of others, will expose us to corruption in thought, word, and deed; and it will require all our vigilance and care to keep the straight path, all our courage and sagacity to secure our-

^a Matt. xxiv. 4. 1 Cor. vi. 9. Eph. v. 6. 2 Thess. ii. 3.

selves from the attempts of robbers that would spoil, and of officious guides that would mislead us.

In the language which the Scriptures use concerning man, they address him as a being fluctuating in his choice between good and evil, possessing discernment to perceive the one, but wanting fortitude and settled resolution to pursue the other. He is not of that angelic order, whose will is the will of God, nor is he a mere machine or instrument, that can only execute the purpose for which it is made. His capacity and relative condition are considered, and he is warned of danger, that he may avoid it, and informed of duty, that he may perform it. The whole counsel of God concerning him is laid open to his view, and he is taught what he must do to be saved. Truth and error, virtue and vice, are exhibited in their plain and natural colours, and he is not left to draw fanciful systems and nice distinctions concerning them, but to determine whether he will have tribulation and anguish as the recompence of contention and disobedience to the truth, or whe-

ther, through “ patient continuance in well-
 “ doing,” he will “ seek for glory, and ho-
 “ nour, and immortality^b.”

The injunction to pray that we may not be led nor fall into temptation^c, and the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit^d to help our infirmities, while they suppose our liability to fall, are no motive of vain security. In the innumerable variations of error, faith may be elevated into presumption, and we may tempt and offend God by an unbecoming reliance on his promises, not less than by a distrust of his goodness and his truth. The hope of the faithful is, that they “ may obtain mercy, and find grace to help “ in time of need^e;” that with the temptation may be made “ a way to escape, that “ they may be able to bear it^f;” and that they may be endued with such strength, as shall enable them to stand against the wiles of the Devil, to “ withstand in the evil day, “ and having done all, to stand^g.” But to

^b Rom. ii. 7. 8 ^c Matt. xxvi. 41. vi. 13. Luke xi. 4.

^d Luke xi. 13. ^e Hebrews iv. 16. ^f 1 Cor. x. 13.

^g Ephes. vi. 11. 13.

be exempted from error, or to be maintained immoveably in the truth, is a privilege which belongeth not to man in the present stage of his existence; a privilege which he has no reason to expect, whether he consults his own experience, the history of other men, or the recorded promises of God.

To be liable to error is the common property of human nature, from which there is no exception in history, and from which the Scriptures lead us not to expect any exemption. The deceivableness of the heart of man is a truth which is written in the plainest and most legible characters, and is confirmed by the experience and observation of every day. Error is nevertheless represented as an evil which we should labour to avoid, and not as a judgment under which we should patiently acquiesce. “Be-
“ ware of false prophets, which come unto
“ you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they
“ are ravening wolves^h.” “ Believe not
“ every spirit, but try the spirits whether
“ they are of God : because many false pro-

^h Matt. vii. 15.

“ phets are gone out into the worldⁱ.” Such also is the solemn declaration of the Lord of hosts, by the prophet Jeremiah: “ Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. . . . I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. . . . The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord^k.”

Instances are frequently occurring, in which the wisdom of this world is proved to be very foolishness. The success of the most plausible speculations, and of the most consummate schemes of policy, is often counteracted by some secret principle of error in which they are severally conceived; and a system of philosophy, which was at one time received every

ⁱ 1 John iv. 1.

^k Jer. xxiii. 16. 25. 28.

where without opposition, is now universally exploded, and shewn to be at variance with the visible operations of nature. And can it excite any just offence or surprise, if in matters in which the senses of men have no concern, and in the interpretation of a volume which many cooperating causes render hard to be understood, the weak should be mistaken, and the designing should deceive; so that the parable is realized, in which the Church is compared with a field in which the enemy is employed in sowing evil seed¹. The knowledge that these things have occurred, and the probability that they will continue to occur, suggest the necessity of caution and vigilance; of caution, in examining the claims of the spirits; and of vigilance, in distinguishing the spirit of Truth from the spirit of Error.

II. The principal means of pursuing this important investigation, in subordination to the supreme authority of the word of God, are the reason and philosophy of

¹ Matt. xiii. 24, 25.

men, their written and their unwritten traditions, and the various measures of divine assistance and illumination which some have received, and which many have pretended to receive, in the interpretation of the sacred volume. Each of these has been recommended as an absolute and exclusive standard by men of different tempers and dispositions, by the inquisitive, the superstitious, and the enthusiastic: all, properly restricted and defined, have their use in the exposition and illustration of the Christian doctrine, and in the confutation of error, when they are applied to the advancement of Christian virtue, and in subserviency to the great Christian profession, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

Reason is not a definitive standard of religious opinions. Wise men are seldom found to ask the advice of another, without being persuaded that the person whom they consult possesses superior judgment and penetration in the difficulty which perplexes them, and which of themselves they are not able to resolve. It is none but the reasoner who professes to seek in-

formation from the Scriptures, and in the issue disallows their authority, who carries a circuitous and childish appeal from himself to another, and from another to himself, from his reason to the Scriptures, and from the Scriptures to his reason again. The will of men is not the measure of the law of God, nor is their knowledge the standard of his truth. The history of the Church of Christ exhibits too many proofs of the effects which a philosophizing spirit has produced on the interpretation of the Gospel, and of the vanity of all attempts to abate the rigour of its precepts, or compromise the sublimity of its doctrines; and it is a fact which cannot be denied, that the writers of the pretended age of reason, acted the part of the sceptic under the assumed character of the philosopher. The effects of a presuming philosophy upon the true religion were foreseen and predicted even in the time of the Apostles: “Beware
“lest any man spoil you through philoso-
“phy and vain deceit, after the tradition
“of men, after the rudiments of the world,

“and not after Christ^m.” This was the earnest warning of Saint Paul; and Saint John describes men who learned and taught in the world a doctrine which the world was too willing to receive, even the denial of the Incarnation of Christ: and he prescribes the belief of this doctrine as a standard, to guide and regulate the judgment of those whom he exhorted to use their own discretion in trying the several spirits, whether they were of Godⁿ.

Reason in its proper sphere has nevertheless much occupation in the concerns of Religion. Her province is to examine the evidences of the truth, both internal and external, and to ascertain whether it is not in the highest degree improbable, that our Christian faith is of the invention of man, and whether it is not an indisputable fact, that it is of the revelation of God. Reason and judgment will also be necessary to the historian, in the illustration, arrangement, and connection of the sacred records; to the interpreter of prophecy in ascertaining its

^m Coloss. ii. 8. ⁿ 1 John iv. 1. 3. 5. 2 John 7. 10.

object, in inquiring into its fulfilment, and in elucidating its highly figurative and frequently mysterious language; to the critic in examining the purity of the text, and removing its grammatical difficulties; to the commentator in explaining and fixing its sense and meaning; and to the controversialist in his earnest contest for the faith delivered to the saints. But when the whole doctrine has been proved to be from God, and there is no just reason to suspect the integrity and authenticity of the several texts in which it is contained, or the legitimacy of the conclusions which are drawn from those texts, there remains no further appeal to human reason. However the authority or the mysterious nature of the Incarnate Christ may exceed our comprehension, or restrain our will, it is not lawful to accommodate them to the prejudices of any earthly philosophy, to make the power of the human mind the measure of the truth, or to reduce the revelations of infinite Wisdom to a level with the degrees of human prepossession.

Philosophy has had its advocates among

the presuming and inquisitive. Tradition claims the homage of the superstitious, who recommend as an infallible standard that, which the very existence of controversy proves to be indecisive. Reverence for the manners and opinions of antiquity, especially when those opinions and manners have contributed to the happiness of succeeding generations, if it be not an act of the highest wisdom, is certainly one of the most amiable weaknesses of mankind. The Christian philosopher, in his trial of all things, will however inquire into the origin, the authority, and the intrinsic merit of every traditional ordinance, nor vainly attach himself to such as had a known and definite rise, distinct from apostolical precedent or institution. He will not admire with a blind credulity what is ancient or what is universal, without examining whether it agrees with the order, the obedience, and the truth which the Scriptures prescribe, whether it tends to the promotion of good works, and whether it contributes to the honour of the one Mediator who came in the flesh. There

are traditions which have sapped the foundations of morality, and have detracted from the glory of the Redeemer. Falsehood and impurity have the sanction of antiquity, and superstition was canonized in the remotest ages, and among the many mediating demons of pagan idolatry.

Tradition must therefore be weighed in the balance, that the dross of human corruptions and inventions may be separated from the pure metal of apostolical allowance and divine institution. While the Lord of life conversed with the Jews, and was offended by their vain traditions, he continually referred them to the true source from which all those traditions were derived, and at the same time discountenanced the vain love of innovation, by observing in his own practice, and accommodating to the use of his own dispensation, various rites and ordinances which had not previously received the sanction of divine authority. In this and in every other respect, let his example be the rule and guide of us his unworthy disciples. In our judgment of ecclesiastical ceremonies, novelties will

have no merit, merely because they are not the relics of antiquity, and traditions will claim no respect, but as they are found good to the use of edifying, and are consistent with that sober decency and settled order, which become the ministrations of the Church. In the interpretation of scriptural truth, where there is no difficulty in ascertaining the sense, there will be no occasion of consulting foreign authorities; and where there is any doubt concerning the true import of a text, which the collation of other texts will not remove, that exposition will be most secure, which, without infringing on the known faith and practice of the Gospel, is recommended by the earliest and the best collateral evidence, which has been received always, every where, and by all men. There is no variety of religious opinion which was not agitated by the ancient controversialists. So rapid was the decay of truth, which may have been indirectly designed to uphold the paramount authority of the Scriptures, that there are few material errors which were not discussed by the Apostles

or their immediate successors; and their comments will be found to agree in recommending men to practise righteousness, and to believe that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

The Spirit which guided the inspired writers in the way of truth, and which brought all the sayings of the Lord to their remembrance^o; the extraordinary gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and faith, of divers kinds of tongues, and of the interpretation of tongues^p; are, in the present circumstances of the Church, not necessary; and because they are not promised, they cannot be expected with a reasonable faith, or be assumed without exciting a suspicion of vanity. It matters not who pretends to these extraordinary revelations, whether it be the boldest infidel who denies, or the weakest visionary who admits, the incarnation of his Saviour. He makes his appeal from the stronger to the weaker power, from the reason to the imagination; and we are the still more confident in the

^o John xiv. 26. xvi. 13.

^p 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10.

rejection of his illusive fancies, not because the individual doubts, or because he presumes, but because the Book of Revelation hath been sealed for ever, with a curse^q upon him who ventures to enlarge or abridge its contents, and not with the promise of new revelations to remove its difficulties and obscurities. The devout inquirer after truth will nevertheless commence his studies with earnest prayer to him who is the Father of lights, and from whom “every good and every perfect gift”^r do proceed. As the Scriptures were originally given by divine inspiration, there is no weakness in believing that divine assistance is necessary, and no presumption in hoping that it will be afforded in the interpretation of them. To maintain that this or that exposition of a text is the result of an immediate inspiration, would be equivalent to claiming a new revelation of truth, and would be justly imputed to fanatical delirium. But no such imputation can be alleged to the pious practice of

^q Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

^r James i. 17.

those, who, acknowledging that they are destitute of wisdom, ask it of God^s, or who, under the conviction that there is foolishness in the natural man which prevents him from receiving the things of the Spirit of God, seek the aid of that Holy Spirit, whose office it is to search and to know the deep things of God, while they are labouring to understand and to deliver the words which that Spirit teacheth, and to compare spiritual things with spiritual^t. Such prayers of humility and faith will assuredly be blessed with an adequate measure of instruction, of improvement, of conviction and confirmation, concerning truth and righteousness. To every one who in searching the Scriptures is diligent in using what he hath, grace will be given, and he will be made to excel; while from him who pretends to gifts which have not been promised or bestowed, will be taken away even that which he seemeth to have^u.

^s James i. 5.

^t 1 Cor. ii. 10, 13, 14.

^u Matt. xiii. 12. xxv. 29. Mark iv. 25. Luke viii. 18. xix. 26.

While in their proper use and measure these several means may be serviceable in assisting the infirmity of men, and preserving them from error; while in their abuse and misapplication all may be vain and deceitful; while pretended visions are but idle dreams; while traditions may be corrupted, and philosophy delusive, there remains the Scripture, given by inspiration of God, and “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,” and “through faith which is in Christ Jesus,” making “wise unto salvation,—that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works^x.” By this light of wisdom and heavenly truth, which shineth in the darkness of human infirmity, we may be guided through all perplexity, certified in all doubt, secured from a false, and confirmed in a true profession of the faith. In the words, not which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, the truth is revealed with such plainness

^x 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17.

and precision, that none but the unlearned or unstable do wrest it to their own destruction. The love of God and of man is unequivocally declared to be the substance of the Law and the Prophets; the mystery of godliness, which is the manifestation of God in the flesh, is declared and defined by that Holy Spirit, who alone can comprehend the deep things of God; and the Divinity himself has condescended to the wants of his creatures, and opened to them the treasures of heavenly knowledge.

But let not deceitful and deceivable man venture to approach the Divine Instructor with unregulated and irreverent mind. Let him not think, that while his understanding is distracted with sinful affections, while his mind is inflamed with pride and prejudice, while he is impatient of instruction, or ambitious of displaying his proficiency, he will be able to overcome the frailty of his nature, or be qualified to comprehend the words of eternal life, and to distinguish the spirit of Error from the spirit of Truth. He must receive the lessons of his Master with all the simplicity and

docility of a child, and proceed from the principles of the doctrine of Christ to the contemplation of those higher mysteries, which are reserved for such as “by reason
 “of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” He must be desirous of doing, not his own will, but the will of the heavenly Father, that he may
 “know of the doctrine, whether it be of God^z.” He must not be hasty in drawing his private interpretations, but patient in comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and in weighing well the whole counsel of God; and as a scribe well instructed in “the
 “kingdom of heaven,” he must draw “out
 “of his treasure things new and old^a.” He must not aspire to wisdom beyond that which is written, if from the Scriptures he would learn for himself, or proclaim to others the truth as it is in Jesus, if he would speak with precision of the common salvation, or contend earnestly for
 “the faith delivered at once to the saints^b.”

^y Heb. v. 12, 14. vi. 1.

^z John vii. 17.

^a Matt. xiii. 52.

^b Jude 3. Ephes. iv. 21.

In the acquisition of heavenly wisdom, a man must be cautious in selecting the end to which he proposes to apply it. The Scriptures were not given to exalt a man's reputation in the world; they will not promote any secular interests; they will not bend and turn to the views of a party. The faithful student who consults them for his private satisfaction, will make them the rule of his duty and the standard of his faith and of his hope full of immortality: and he who has occasion to draw from the sources of divine knowledge for the public instruction of others, will direct them to the establishment of an harmonious and consistent faith; to the recommendation of unblemished holiness; to the promotion of love among brethren; and to the consolidation of order, peace, and unity in the Church of God.

III. These legitimate objects and qualifications of the inquirer after scriptural truth may be but little heeded by an inconsiderate and undiscerning multitude. The melancholy effects arising from the neglect of them are but too obvious, and are every day

exhibited in the lowered tone of Christian morality, in the want of private charity, in the disunion of the Church through the prevalence of erroneous doctrines, and in the scornful indifference with which a holy zeal for the truth is discountenanced and reviled. Most seasonable and important therefore is it to attend to the warning voice of the beloved disciple; "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world^c." Most seasonable and important is it to adhere to the criterion, which he and his Divine Master have proposed, of judging them by their fruits, and by their denial or confession of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, that by these means we may distinguish the spirit of Error from the spirit of Truth.

Of the spirits of error and worldly wisdom, none is more deceitful or more imposing, or more successful in his wandering through the earth, than that which

^c 1 John iv. 1.

recommends a spurious liberality; which teaches that there is no error, or that there is no offence in error; that theological controversy originates in, and is supported by, mutual misapprehension and misrepresentation; that all men are agreed in the acknowledgment of essential doctrines; and that the shades of error are but as the specks and clouds which none but the curious observer can discern, upon the Sun of righteousness and truth. In answer to this master spirit, it may be of use to exhibit the prophecies which speak of specific errors; to shew what false prophets are actually in the world; to collect their various sentiments, as far as is possible, from the writings, and to recite the very words of their ostensible advocates and apologists, and to convict them by an appeal to the sense and language of the Scriptures. In pursuing this course with the modernized doctrines of Socinus and of Calvin, with the forms and superstitions of the Church of Rome, with the various ecclesiastical anomalies which had their origin in the convulsions of the sixteenth

century, and with the practical manners of those, who, with a professed respect for the form of godliness, are but too destitute of its power, the chief spirits that are in the world will be brought to trial, and occasion will be afforded to judge of their pretensions whether they are of God. The doctrines of our own Church, exhibited in her Articles and public Formularies, will be submitted to the same examination, that we may not only “prove all things,” but be persuaded to “hold fast that which is good.” In the proposed method of investigation, two leading evils, which are commonly imputed to the polemic, will be avoided. The citation of the words of other men will obviate the charge of misrepresentation; and the collection of scriptural testimonies and arguments will prevent the imputation, that while we reprove the errors of others, we are guilty of preaching ourselves and our own inventions, rather than the unadulterated truth as it is in Jesus.

It is of importance to allay the apprehensions which may naturally arise in the minds of judicious and reflecting men, that

this course is calculated to circulate the errors which it professes to restrain, and that the proposed exhibition of false doctrine, heresy, and schism, has a tendency to excite doubts and difficulties in the minds of the inexperienced, to unsettle their religious principles, and to disturb the peace of their future lives. The objection has been anticipated, and it is hoped that the danger which is common to all religious controversy will be counteracted by corresponding advantages. Whether an erroneous belief, like a vicious practice, to be hated needs but to be seen in its real unqualified deformity, or whether a familiarity with heretical opinions may not abate the offence which is excited by a more distant acquaintance, are questions on which it is not meant to insist. It will probably be admitted, that little mischief is to be apprehended from exposing the nakedness of the precipice, which none but the blind or the desperate will venture to approach, and that it is more necessary to warn the incautious traveller of the concealed and secret chasm, which is covered

with such wild and luxurious herbage as delights his eye at the same time that it entangles his feet, and through which he is tempted to pursue his course, in the hope of finding a less incumbered path, until he is suddenly precipitated into the yawning abyss. It is even so in the mazes of error and unbelief. The infidel, who denies at once the truth of Christianity, or of any of its received doctrines, offers such violence to the prepossessions of every educated mind, as generally provokes a refutation as vehement and unqualified as the original assertion. It is by sophistry, and the appearance of reasoning, and by the gradual insinuation of doubts and difficulties, that the simplicity of the unwary is ordinarily overcome. This danger is not admitted into our inquiry. We do not produce, or pretend to refute, the reasoning from which the several classes of religious opinions are derived; but we state the conclusions only, which are drawn from that reasoning, and oppose to them the plain authority of the Scriptures. The reasonings remain where they were found:

and if any shall be tempted to a further trial of the poison which it has been our endeavour to neutralize, with him be the danger, and with him be the blame. We warn him of his peril, and before he makes the hazardous experiment, we call upon him in the words of the Apostle, to beware of philosophy and vain deceit; and we entreat him to prove the vigour of his constitution, and the strength of the antidotes which he hath provided, before he ventures to taste of waters which may stupefy and render delirious, where they have not power to destroy.

It will be our studious care that no material error shall appear, without being contrasted with a corresponding authority from the Scriptures: and if there be some whose temerity and perverseness will lead them to the pursuit of error, others more wise and ingenuous will seek to be confirmed in the knowledge of the truth, and of that sound doctrine by which gainsayers may be convicted and convinced. In the allegation of these scriptural testimonies, it will be shewn that there is no error

which hath not been predicted, and hence will arise a new argument in confirmation of the faith generally, when even the weaknesses of his Church are made to bear evidence to the truth and the wisdom of Jesus, by whom they were foreknown and foretold; and of particular articles also, when each specific error, which is asserted by its advocates, is repelled by a distinct assertion, or by an appeal to the ordinary tenor of the Scriptures. While this cursory and superficial application of the divine oracles does but little justice to the argument, it may lead the zealous student to a more diligent and elaborate trial of their strength in controversy; in which he will be convinced that there is nothing in which human error and inspired truth are more opposite to each other, than in the simplicity of the one, and the intricacy of the other. The general propositions of the one confound, those of the other edify the mind: and in the detail and process of their several arguments, the one distresses, by exciting such anxieties, and doubts, and subtle scruples, as end in desperation and

unbelief; the other conveys to the soul, comfort, instruction, and confirmed faith, until it is filled “with all joy and peace “in believing,” and made to “abound in “hope, through the power of the Holy “Ghost^d.”

It is the nature of truth to be uniform, of error to be variable and inconsistent. Many proofs of this assertion will arise in the course of the ensuing inquiry, in which it will be made indirectly to appear, that the advocates of conflicting errors might usefully employ all their energies in opposition to each other, and leave the apologists of the truth to be silent arbiters of the contest. It is necessary however, that the arbiters should be deeply acquainted with the questions which are at issue; and in the mutual jealousies which agitate all descriptions of religionists, it is often painful to observe how little they seem to understand, and how willing they are to misrepresent, the sentiments of each other. Hence are much learning, much judg-

^d Rom. xv. 13.

ment, and, what is of far higher importance, much Christian temper and love, frequently exhausted in confuting exploded errors, and in exposing to unmerited obloquy those who are supposed to maintain them. In the same manner new opinions are suffered to circulate without notice or control, and the fluctuations and variable-ness of error are often not known or condemned, before they have ceased to exist. This inconvenience will in some degree be obviated, by presenting, as it were, a syllabus of popular opinions in religion, as they are maintained by writers now living, or very recently deceased. Let it not be an occasion of complaint, if, while the reasonings of these writers are reserved, their conclusions are exhibited in general propositions drawn up by themselves, and in their own words, and if, in separate and succeeding discourses, their several doctrines are brought into immediate collision with each other. In discourses which consist principally of a series of quotations, extracted from writers of very different qualifications, even correct composition is a

matter of difficulty, and the ornaments of a graceful and flowing style are all but unattainable. These are deficiencies which will be easily excused, if there can be exhibited such a correct view of the spirits that are in the world, that not only may the spirit of Error be distinguished from the spirit of Truth, but the form and bearing of religious opinions in the present day may be known and ascertained. It will contribute much to our own edification, much to conciliation and success in controversy, much to the prevention of error and needless division, to know accurately what doctrines are now cherished in the world, what are the principal objects of vigilance and exertion, and what are the truths for which we should most constantly and most earnestly contend.

May it not therefore be to the offence of any, may it be for the edification of all, to exhibit the errors of the day, divested of their deleterious power, and counteracted by that scriptural knowledge, which, applied with an honest mind to the purpose, which it was intended to effect,

is beyond all modern inspiration, all tradition, all philosophy, the proof of our Christian doctrine, and our best security from that proneness to error, from which in no human endeavour or pursuit can we hope to be exempted. The extravagancies of false doctrine which will hereafter be unfolded to the view, will, it is hoped, be so far from contaminating the young and inexperienced, that they will be deterred from embracing error, when they see its distortions and deformities. At the same time may they be inspired with a love of truth, when they behold her beauty of form and symmetry of proportion. May they also be persuaded to call no man their father upon earth, to resolve with all their faculties to seek and to know the only God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and to acknowledge the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures in all things which concern their salvation. May the God of truth and love, whose servants we all are, and to whom we shall all render the account, so direct and assist us by the influence of his Holy Spirit, that in exposing

damnable heresies, and in contending for the common salvation, we may speak nothing through contention and vain glory, nothing which militates against the truth. In discountenancing vain traditions, and in teaching others to avoid those who cause divisions amongst us, may he enable us to recommend the unity, order, decency, and all things which contribute to edification in the Church. In condemning those whose religious practice is destitute of the power of godliness, may he guide us to rebuke vice with all boldness, and at the same time to instruct with meekness those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. Under his holy influence may we all “adorn the Gospel of God our Saviour in all things,” and knowing that we are all “members one of another,” may we so speak the truth in love, that we may in all things “grow up into him who is the Head, even Christ, in whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the

“ effectual working of every part in measure, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love^e.”

^e Eph. iv. 15, 16.

SERMON II.

DOCTRINES OF THE UNITARIANS COMPARED
WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

2 PETER ii. 1.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

THE varieties of opinion which from the earliest periods of the Christian era have obtained concerning him who is the only begotten of the Father, form a presumptive evidence, that there is in his nature something which is extraordinary, something which cannot be comprehended by the faculties, or defined in the common language of men. Of the eternal Father there is but one opinion, that he is God: of man there is also but one opinion, that he is man. Moses, Samuel, and David,

and all the goodly fellowship of the prophets, however elevated by their office, or distinguished by their actions, have uniformly, and without variation, spoken of themselves, and been described by others, as men. Men in origin and descent; men in weakness and infirmity; men in their limited virtues and faculties; men in the execution of the power which they received in dependance upon the will of God; men in the manner of their deaths; they proved their descent from men; they were esteemed the fellows of men; and neither while they lived, nor when they died, were they represented in other terms than those which are appropriated to men.

Very different from the language of Moses concerning himself, and from that of the Jewish writers concerning him, are the terms which the Apostles and Evangelists apply to Jesus of Nazareth; terms not only of mysterious and recondite meaning, but in the highest degree contradictory and irrelevant, if they relate to an ordinary mortal prophet, and applicable only to one whose generation was eternal, whose nature is

unsearchable. It is not necessary to refer to the early heresies concerning him, in which his divine and human natures were alternately divided and confounded, in which he was at one time so identified with the Father, as if the Father had suffered, and at another, so separated from humanity, as to be denied a corporeal existence. It is nevertheless of importance to observe the progress of error, and the order in which different articles of the faith have been successively called in question, of which it is a sufficient proof, that the beloved disciple defended the humanity before the divinity of Christ, his equality with man before his equality with God.

It will be shewn that the sacred writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, have declared the truth under every variety of expression, and they seem to have anticipated and precluded error, by the diversified but concurrent testimonies which they have produced concerning the Son of God. They foresaw and they foretold the damnable heresies which false teachers should privily bring in, and they warned

their converts and disciples of the pernicious ways of those who should “deny the Lord who bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction^a,” and of those who should turn “the grace of our Lord into lasciviousness, and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ^b.” They spake also of the irretrievable fall of some, who should “crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame^c,” and of the inconceivable punishment of such as should tread “under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite unto the Spirit of grace^d.” “Beware,” saith the Apostle, “lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily^e.” In their earnest contest for “the faith delivered at

^a 2 Peter ii. 1.

^b Jude 4.

^c Heb. vi. 6.

^d Heb. x. 29.

^e Col. ii. 8, 9.

“once to the saints^f ;” in their holy zeal for the “acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge^g ;” in prophesying of errors which should disfigure the simplicity of Christian truth, there is no censure of the worship which was paid to Christ immediately after the resurrection^h ; no precautionary admonition against the continuance of such worship ; no restrictive interpretation of the sublime and lofty terms which are appropriated to the Messiah ; no prediction, nor even the most distant insinuation, that there would be error or heresy, guilt or danger, in raising him above the condition of humanity. All their caution is employed against degrading the Son of man ; all their eloquence in elevating the Son of God.

That the words of these holy men have on various occasions been misunderstood, and a meaning imputed to them which they were not intended to convey, is a po-

^f Jude 3.

^g Col. ii. 2, 3.

^h Matt. xxviii. 17.

sition which it would be vain to deny. But on the supposition that on this peculiar point they have been misunderstood, it is not easy to account for the silence in which one, at least, of their number suffered an opinion to pass which originated under his immediate observation, and drew strength and confirmation from his languageⁱ, both in the introduction of his Gospel, and in the conclusion of his first Epistle, in which he maintains the same doctrine, that the Word was God, even the true God. Neither can a sufficient reason be assigned, why the prophetic spirit which resided in the Apostles hath not made the slightest allusion to this error, which from the beginning has been admitted into the creeds of the Christian Church, and which the whole Scriptures have been made to authorize. It is certain that no apostasy can be compared with this alleged erroneous doctrine, in duration, in extent, or in enormity, and that it cannot be more offensive to the refine-

ⁱ John i. 1. 1 John v. 20.

ments of modern philosophy, than it must have been to the Jews, and to the descendants of Jews, unless it had been familiarized to them in their traditions, and recommended in the authentic Scriptures from which those traditions were derived.

Whether the Jewish Church was or was not Unitarian in the sense in which the term is now ordinarily but disingenuously applied, is a question which it is not intended to discuss. An end would readily be put to the controversy, and it should be conceded without hesitation or reserve, that every Christian and every Jew is an Unitarian, if that denomination was simply defined, “a person who believes in and worships “one God only^k.” This is a truth which Israel heard from Sinai, and which hath been repeated and enforced on the attention of the disciples of Christ. But this definition is perplexed and embarrassed with restrictions and additions, as is that which relates to the humanity of Christ;

^k A Unitarian Christian's Statement and Defence of his Principles : by John Prior Estlin, LL. D. p. 26.

and we are challenged to collect the sentiments of our adversaries, and to consult the standard of the Scriptures, whether the Father be the object of exclusive worship; what is the nature, and what the office of Jesus of Nazareth; and of what nature and extent are the Holy Spirit and his gifts and operations. Subordinate questions, which may be decided by a more cursory argument, will arise concerning the nature and condition of man, the eternity of punishment, the nature of angels, and the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures.

I. It is the “solemn, deliberate, and firm “conviction” of the Unitarian, “that the “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ “is the only God¹;” and “that there is “one God in one person only, . . . the sole “object of all religious worship, the only “invisible Being with whom reasonable “creatures can have any intercourse, or “upon whom they can have any depend-

¹ Unitarianism the Doctrine of the Gospel: by Lant Carpenter, LL. D. p. 350. 73.

“ance^m.” “Unitarians do not pray to Christ, because they think this would be a violation of the first commandment, and that it is the source of most of the corruptions of Christianityⁿ.” “Unitarians, properly so called, disclaim the doctrine of a subordinate Creator and Governor of the universe : .. they acknowledge no delegated Creator, no inferior God^o.” They “feel themselves bound to reject, and under an imperative sense of duty to enter their solemn protest against the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity, as an ancient and gross corruption of the Christian revelation^p,” “.. manifestly repugnant to the fundamental principles both of the Jewish and Christian revelations, and to the clearest and most explicit language, both of the Old Testament and the New^q.”

^m Letters addressed to the Bishop of London, in Vindication of the Unitarians : by Thomas Belsham, p. 5.

ⁿ Estlin, p. 31.

^o Belsham's Letters to the Bishop of London, p. 9.

^p Ibid. p. 8.

^q Ibid. p. 35. See Carpenter, p. 79, 80.

In vindication of these gross corruptions as they are called, and of our belief of their scriptural origin and authenticity, we appeal to the clear and explicit language of our Saviour, when he commanded the converted nations to be baptized, not in the names, but “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost^r,” thus perpetuating the doctrine by the ordinances of his Church. We appeal also to that of his Apostle, whose solemn benediction of the Corinthians was, that “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost^s” might be with them; and who felt the most earnest zeal for the Colossians, Laodiceans, and other disciples, “that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,”

^r Matt. xxviii. 19.

^s 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

“ for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the
 “ Godhead bodily^t.” He is surely no dele-
 gated Creator, no inferior God, “ who, be-
 “ ing in the form of God, thought it not
 “ robbery to be equal with God;” at
 whose name all things in heaven and in
 earth have been taught to bow^u. He is the
 Son, by whom God made the worlds; by
 whom “ all things were made, and without
 “ whom was not any thing made that was
 “ made;” who is the “ brightness of his Fa-
 “ ther’s glory, and the express image of his
 “ person,” even “ the image of the invisible
 “ God;” whom “ he that hath seen, hath seen
 “ the Father” also; who “ upholdeth all things
 “ by the word of his power,” and by whom
 “ all things consist^x.” To him we offer our
 prayers without fear of violating the com-
 mandment, while we follow the example of
 his martyr Stephen^y and his Apostle Paul^z,

^t Col. ii. 1, 2, 3. 9.

^u Philipp. ii. 6. 10. Compare Isaiah xlv. 23. and Ro-
 mans xiv. 10, 11, 12.

^x Heb. i. 2. John i. 3. Col. i. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 4. John
 xiv. 9. Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 17. Eccclus. xliii. 26.

^y Acts vii. 59, 60.

^z 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

and the precept of his beloved disciple, who records the practice of the age in which he lived. “These things have I
 “ written to you that believe on the name
 “ of the Son of God; that ye may know
 “ that ye have eternal life, and that ye
 “ may believe on the name of the Son of
 “ God. And this is the confidence that
 “ we have in him, that, if we ask any thing
 “ according to his will, he heareth us: and
 “ if we know that he hears us, whatsoever
 “ we ask, we know that we have the peti-
 “ tions which we desired of him^a.” This doctrine of the Apostle coincides with the words of our Lord himself: “Whatsoever
 “ ye shall ask in my name, that will I do,
 “ that the Father may be glorified in the
 “ Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my
 “ name, I will do it^b.”

2. In contending for “the proper or simple humanity of Jesus^c,” a “Unitarian Christian waves the dispute, whether
 “ Christ is ever called God in the New

^a 1 John v. 13, 14, 15.

^b John xiv. 13, 14.

^c Carpenter, p. 1. note.

“ Testament, or even in the prophetic
“ writings^d.” This will be acknowledged a
concise and convenient method of evading
and suppressing a difficulty which it is not
possible to overlook or to refute. Unitari-
ans “ believe that Jesus Christ was a
“ proper human being in all respects like
“ unto his brethren, but distinguished from
“ them as the chosen servant of God^e :”
that he “ was a man in the strict and pro-
“ per sense of the term^f,” “ having no ex-
“ istence before his human birth^g.” There
is a “ conviction” in the minds of some,
“ that Jesus was, properly speaking, in hea-
“ ven when he was with God; that there-
“ fore he went up into heaven when his
“ peculiar intercourse with God began;
“ that he came down from heaven when
“ he came forth from God to discharge
“ the great work which his Father who is
“ in heaven had given him to do^h.” Al-

^d Estlin, p. 29.

^e Belsham's Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 5. 59.

^f Carpenter, p. 73.

^g Ibid. p. 7. 84.

^h Ibid. p. 259.

though such convictions have no evidence to support them, it is further contended, “ that if Jesus were a being who existed in “ a state of great glory and happiness be- “ fore his human birth, and was then “ united with a human frame, (which is “ the doctrine of preexistence,) then he “ was not truly and properly man, and “ consequently every passage in which he “ is called man, and every expression and “ reasoning apparently founded upon his “ being man, must be understood figu- “ rativelyⁱ.” It is the opinion of the same writer, that there is “ no supposition in any “ degree so improbable as the incarnation “ of a preexistent spirit^k.” “ The preex- “ istence of Christ” is nevertheless “ a doc- “ trine which many Unitarians hold^l,” al- though some have classed it among the “ early corruptions of evangelical truth, “ which disfigure and disgrace the Gospel “ of Christ^m,” and have pronounced it to

ⁱ Carpenter, p. 225.

^k Ibid. p. 259.

^l Estlin, p. 33.

^m Belsham’s Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 60. 61.

be a doctrine “totally destitute of adequate
 “evidence”ⁿ.” “Many Unitarians have be-
 “lieved the miraculous conception, and
 “others . . . have wished it to be true^o :”
 while others again suppose it to have been
 “the fiction of some early Gentile convert,
 “who hoped, by elevating the dignity of
 “the founder, to abate the popular preju-
 “dice against the sect^p :” a fiction which
 “would to the generality of Christians be
 “extremely gratifying, as it would lessen
 “the odium attached to Christianity from
 “its founder being a crucified Jew, and
 “would elevate him to the dignity of the
 “heroes and demigods of the heathen my-
 “thology^q.”

If Peter had never been reproved for deprecating the passion of the Lord^r; if Paul had not been known to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ^s; if any

ⁿ Carpenter, p. 225. note.

^o Estlin, p. 33.

^p Improved Version. Note on Matt. i.

^q Ibid. Note on Luke i.

^r Matt. xvi. 23.

^s Galat. vi. 14.

attempt had been made in any part of the New Testament to disguise the ignominy of the crucifixion ; if the necessity of it had not been repeatedly maintained by our Lord himself^t ; if Christ crucified had been a stumbling block to any but the Jews, an absurdity to any but the Greeks ; and if he had not always been in the judgment of his disciples “ the power of God, and the “ wisdom of God^u ;” there might have been some pretext for these absurd and unjust insinuations ; absurd in imputing to his disciples a desire of doing what it was not in their power to do, and unjust in ascribing to them a sense of shame which it was not in their nature to feel. Without falsifying the Scriptures, without entirely destroying them, they could not suppress the fact, that their master was a crucified Jew ; and it was in this crucified Jew, raised from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, that they learned

^t Matt. xvi. 21. xx. 19. Mark ix. 31. x. 34. Luke xviii. 33. xxiv. 7. 26.

^u 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

to glory; and in him, not only not to elevate, but to hold in the utmost abhorrence and contempt the weakness and the worthlessness of all the heroes and demigods of the heathen mythology.

Let it not be imputed to an indifference or unconcern to the truth, if we forbear to express what the occasion might justify; if we omit to take advantage of these conflicting statements which have been recited; if we proceed to the confutation of them in the spirit of meekness, and with the soberness of scriptural argument; and if no passionate exclamation is extorted by the recorded confession of an Unitarian: “Were
“ I to be convinced that Jesus possessed a
“ nature infinitely beyond human nature,
“ I should cease to perceive the simplicity
“ of truth^x.” Our faith is not shaken, though it be “involved in all the mystery
“ of a two-fold nature in the man Christ
“ Jesus^y;” because in proportion to the mystery of the doctrine is the improbability that it should have been invented by

^x Carpenter, p. 70.

^y Ibid. p. 256.

the fraud or received by the credulity of men, or entertained upon any other principle than a full and deliberate conviction of its scriptural, apostolical, and divine authority. The most rigid Unitarian does not believe more fully than we believe, that Jesus was a man,—a man from God^z; that he was “born of a woman^a;” that “as “the children are partakers of flesh and “blood, he also himself likewise took part “of the same^b;” and that in all things, except sin, it behoved him to be like unto his brethren^c. When however we find the word *man*^d appropriated to a higher order of beings, and not descriptive of what the Unitarian calls “a proper human being,” and when we find many descriptions of Jesus relating to his becoming flesh^e, to his being manifested in the flesh^f, to his being born or descended in the flesh^g, highly inappropriate to a

^z Acts ii. 22. *ανδρα απο της Θεου αποδειγμενον εις υμας.*

^a Gal. iv. 4. ^b Heb. ii. 14. ^c Heb. iv. 15. ii. 17.

^d Compare Luke xxiv. 4. 23. also Acts i. 10. and x. 30. with xi. 13.

^e John i. 14. ^f 1 Tim. iii. 16. ^g Rom. i. 3. ix. 5.

mere mortal man, we are constrained not to deny his humanity, but to contend for a higher nature in connection with his humanity.

Our faith advances as we observe the descriptions of his preexistence. We hear him asserting his existence before Abraham^h, and alluding to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and to the love with which he was loved before its foundationⁱ. We hear also his “beloved disciple declaring, that in the “beginning was the Word, and the “Word became flesh^k,” and that Isaiah “saw his glory^l.” We hear also his forerunner, the Baptist, asserting, that he who came after him was before him^m, and his Apostle St. Paul designating him “the first-“born of every creature,” or the one born before all creationⁿ, and insisting upon his presence with the Israelites in the wilder-

^h John viii. 58.

ⁱ John xvii. 5. 24.

^k John i. 1. 14.

^l John xii. 41. Isaiah vi. 1.

^m John i. 15. 30. Οπισω με ερχεται ανηρ, ος εμπροσθεν με ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ· οτι πρωτος με ην.

ⁿ Col. i. 15. πρωτοτοκος πασης κτισεως.

ness °. There is therefore a full series of scriptural testimonies to justify our belief in the preexistence of Christ: and our faith proceeds to the incarnation of this pre-existent spirit. This incarnation we infer from the texts in which the Son is said to have been sent into the world^p, the Word to have become flesh^q, the Son of God to have been born of a woman^r, and the Christ to have been born or descended^s, to have come^t, to have been manifested^u, and to have been put to death^x, *in the flesh* to have been sent in the likeness of sinful flesh^y, to have taken upon him the form of a servant, to have been made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, to have humbled himself and become obedient unto death^z.

Such expressions could not with any propriety be applied to a proper human being, but they do justly and fitly designate the

° 1 Cor. ix. 4.

q John i. 14.

s Romans i. 3. ix. 5.

u 1 Tim. iii. 16.

y Romans viii. 3.

p John iii. 17.

r Galat. iv. 4.

t 1 John iv. 2, 3. 2 John 7.

x 1 Peter iii. 18.

z Philipp. ii. 7, 8.

incarnation of a preexistent spirit, and leave no excuse for the disbelief of that doctrine. The incarnation involves the miraculous conception; which, notwithstanding its imputed fabrication, and the motives of that fabrication, “many Unitarians have believed, and others . . . have wished to be true^a.” and may God grant, that the faith of the many may be confirmed, and the wishes of others be fulfilled, by a just consideration of the argument in its favour. The existing accounts of it confessedly appear in all manuscripts and in all versions, which are now extant, and were known at a period, when interpolation was all but impracticable, and when the plain and straight current of tradition from apostolical men could not have been polluted by an innovation so absurd, or turned into a channel so devious, as the supposed fiction is represented to be. It is a difficulty greater than any which is alleged against the authenticity of the narrative, that the impositions of a very ordinary inventor should

^a Estlin, p. 33.

have been admitted into two of the Gospels, and immediately approved in the Church, with but one dissentient voice, among the Gentiles or the Jews, and that a voice of but feeble power and authority. On the admission, therefore, of the narrative, we are justified in inferring, from the words of authentic Scripture^b, that “ Jesus “ was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and “ born of the Virgin Mary.” We believe also, that Jesus Christ is our Lord, not only our Master and Teacher, but in that sense in which he is Lord of all^c; and in which “ no man can say that he is Lord, “ but by the Holy Ghost^d.” Finally, we believe, that he is God, not in virtue of his prophetic office, which is denoted by that sacred name in one only text^e of the New Testament, in which it is used in the plural form; but the Word, which was in the beginning before prophet or people existed, was God^f, was “ in the form of God, and

^b Matt. i. 18. 20. 23. 25. Luke i. 27. 34, 35.

^c Acts x. 36.

^d 1 Cor. xii. 3.

^e John x. 34, 35. Ps. lxxxii. 6. ^f John i. 1.

“ thought it not robbery to be equal with
 “ God^g,” is even “ over all, God blessed
 “ for evermore^h.” In the confession of
 Thomas, he is “ my Lord, and my Godⁱ !”
 in the prediction of Isaiah, he is “ the
 “ mighty God^k :” in the declaration of
 John, he “ is the true God^l :” he is the
 one, that hath spoken of himself ; “ I am
 “ Alpha and Omega, the beginning and
 “ the ending, saith the Lord, which is,
 “ which was, and which is to come, the
 “ Almighty^m .”

3. “ A Unitarian Christian holds the divi-
 “ nity, although not the deity of Christ.
 “ He holds the divinity of his mission, the
 “ divinity of his doctrine, the divinity of
 “ his precepts, and the perfection of his
 “ example . . . He reverences Jesus as under
 “ God, the only Lord of conscience ; the
 “ only King and Head in his kingdom, the
 “ Church ; as his Saviour and Redeemer ;

^g Philip. ii. 6. ^h Romans ix. 5. ⁱ John xx. 28.

^k Isaiah ix. 6. See Waterland's Sermons at Lady
 Moyer's Lecture, Sermon VI.

^l 1 John v. 20.

^m Rev. i. 8.

“ as to him the Author, Prince, or Leader ;
 “ the Dispenser of eternal life, and as his
 “ final Judgeⁿ.” He apprehends, that there
 is “ no reason to believe, that he was any
 “ thing more than what the Prophets fore-
 “ told, and his Apostles taught, viz. the
 “ chosen servant of God, the long predict-
 “ ed Messiah, the Prophet who was to
 “ come into the world^o :” “ the grand sub-
 “ ordinate agent in the Christian scheme,
 “ and therefore, in reference to the king-
 “ dom of the Messiah, the greatest of all
 “ beings under God^p.” He sees “ clear,
 “ collected, and decisive evidence, from the
 “ whole tenor of the New Testament, that
 “ Jesus Christ was a human being in all
 “ respects like to his brethren, only, that
 “ God was with him, in a sense in which
 “ he never was with any other individual of
 “ mankind, for that he communicated the

ⁿ Estlin, p. 27, 28. Belsham’s Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 34. Carpenter, p. 24. 234. 269.

^o Belsham’s Letters to the Unitarian Christians in South Wales, p. 18.

^p Carpenter, p. 82. 295.

“ spirit without measure unto him⁹.” The belief of “ an Unitarian, as far as it respects “ the Person and Office of our Saviour, is, “ that God appointed the man Christ Jesus “ to declare to mankind his mind and will “ respecting their duty and expectations ; “ in other words, to reveal the doctrines of “ free pardon and everlasting life, to point “ out the conditions by which these blessings are to be acquired, and to declare “ the consequences of impenitence and disobedience :” and he does “ not think, “ that the Scriptures teach any end of the “ mission and death of our Saviour, which “ is not included in these, or at least subservient to them^r.”

4. Without staying to invalidate these propositions, derogatory as they are to the Person and Office of our Saviour, we may proceed to collect the more specific statements of the doctrine of the Atonement, which is said to rest “ upon its own evi-

⁹ Belsham's Letters to the Unitarian Christians, p. 17, 18. Carpenter, p. 24.

^r Carpenter, p. 6. 7. 8. 291. 308.

“ dence, and is admitted in some sense by
 “ some Unitarian Christians. The scriptu-
 “ ral doctrine of at-one-ment, or bringing
 “ to one, that is, of reconciliation, it is
 “ presumed is embraced by all^s.” “ Uni-
 “ tarians allow the efficacy of the death of
 “ Christ; but then that efficacy is *to take*
 “ *away sin entirely, to destroy it, and not*
 “ *to satisfy God, that thus he may be*
 “ *induced to pardon it; in one word, to*
 “ *save men, not in their sins, but from*
 “ *their sins^t.*” “ They conceive, that the
 “ death of Christ is no where represented
 “ in the Scriptures, as an expiatory sacri-
 “ fice for human guilt, as appeasing the
 “ wrath of God, as a satisfaction to divine
 “ justice, or as a vicarious suffering for the
 “ transgressions of mankind^u.” In their
 judgment, “ the sufferings and death of
 “ Jesus were necessary in order to fulfil
 “ the gracious purposes for which he came,
 “ and therefore his death was a necessary

^s Estlin, p. 28.

^t Ibid. p. 70.

^u Belsham's Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 10. Car-
 penter, p. 324.

“ sacrifice for the redemption of mankind.
“ But that he suffered and died in our
“ stead, in order to satisfy the justice of
“ God, that his death propitiated or recon-
“ ciled God to man,” is without hesitation
pronounced “ not Christian doctrine^x.” It
is maintained also by the Unitarian, that in
the Scriptures, “ the benevolence of God
“ is represented as complete and unlimited,
“ his mercy as unrestrained and independ-
“ ent of all external causes, except the
“ moral quality of its object, and his for-
“ giveness as ready to be freely bestowed
“ whenever the sinner complies with the
“ condition of pardon^y ;” and it is his “ full
“ and firm conviction, that the death of
“ Christ made no change in the divine pur-
“ poses, dispositions, or dealings towards
“ mankind, further than as it tended by
“ operating a powerful motive on the well-
“ disposed mind, and by assuring the most
“ important promises and declarations, to
“ render men fit to receive the blessings

^x Carpenter, p. 9. 271. 324. 349. Estlin, p. 29.

^y Carpenter, p. 282.

“ which he was sent to offer^z.” The Unitarian finds “ no reference to any mysterious efficacy in his death, still less to the necessity of faith in such efficacy^a ;” and he opposes “ the doctrines as unscriptural; injurious to the divine character, and baneful in their moral tendency^b.”

The objections to our faith, which are deduced from the moral attributes of the Deity, or from its alleged effects upon the manners of mankind, must be confuted in subordination to the principal inquiry which relates to the scriptural authenticity of the doctrine. This doctrine will be sufficiently confirmed, by reciting the inspired testimonies which prove, that Jesus was a propitiation for sin, a vicarious offering for the sins of men, and that his blood was the price of our redemption. In his own words, he was to give his flesh “ for the life of the world^c,” and he came “ to give his life a ransom for many^d.” In those of his Apo-

^z Carpenter, p. 242.

^a Ibid. p. 287.

^b Ibid. p. 342. 351.

^c John vi. 51.

^d Matt. xx. 28.

stles, he “gave himself a ransom for all^e ;”
 and he is the price for such as believe^f, even
 the price with which we were bought^g: nor
 have we “been redeemed with corruptible
 “ things, as silver and gold, but with the
 “ precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb
 “ without blemish and without spot^h.” “He
 “ suffered the just for the unjustⁱ:” “ he
 “ redeemed us from the curse of the Law,
 “ being made a curse for us^k ;” “ and him,
 “ who knew no sin, did God make to be a
 “ sin-offering for us^l ;” “ Christ our pass-
 “ over was sacrificed for us^m ;” and “ was
 “ offered to bear the sins of manyⁿ ;” “ nei-
 “ ther by the blood of bulls and of calves,
 “ but by his own blood, he entered in once
 “ into the holy place, having obtained
 “ eternal redemption for us^o.” “ He ap-
 “ peared to put away sin by the sacrifice of
 “ himself^p ;” “ and he is the propitiation

^e 1 Tim. ii. 6.

^f 1 Peter ii. 7.

^g 1 Cor. vi. 20. vii. 23.

^h 1 Peter i. 18, 19.

ⁱ 1 Peter iii. 18.

^k Galat. iii. 13.

^l 2 Cor. v. 21.

^m 1 Cor. v. 7.

ⁿ Hebrews ix. 28. Isaiah liii. 12.

^o Hebrews ix. 12.

^p Ibid. ix. 26.

“ for our sins⁹.” It is he, “ whom God
“ hath set forth to be a propitiation, or
“ mercy-seat, through faith in his blood,
“ to declare his righteousness for the re-
“ mission of sins that are past, through
“ the forbearance of God; to declare at
“ this time his righteousness: that he is
“ just, and the justifier of him that be-
“ lieveth in Jesus^r.” “ For when we were
“ yet without strength, Christ died for the
“ ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man
“ will one die: yet peradventure for a
“ good man some would even dare to die.
“ But God commendeth his love toward
“ us, in that, while we were yet sinners,
“ Christ died for us. Much more then now,
“ having been justified by his blood, we
“ shall be saved from wrath through him.
“ For if, when we were enemies, we were
“ reconciled to God by the death of his
“ Son, much more, having been reconciled,
“ we shall be saved by his life. And not
“ only so, but we also joy in God through
“ our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have

⁹ 1 John ii. 2.

^r Romans iii. 25, 26.

“ now received the atonement, or reconcilia-
 “ tion^s :” —for “ God was in Christ, re-
 “ conciling the world unto himself, not
 “ imputing their trespasses unto them^t.”
 Let not our faith be thought to derogate
 from the honour of God, if we believe
 and confess, that when “ all had sinned, and
 “ come short of the glory of God, they were
 “ justified freely by the redemption that is
 “ in Christ Jesus^u :” nor let it be other-
 wise than “ to the praise of the glory of his
 “ grace, that he hath made us accepted in
 “ the Beloved, in whom we have redemp-
 “ tion through his blood, the forgiveness
 “ of sins, according to the riches of his
 “ grace^v :” or that those who “ were some-
 “ time alienated and enemies in their mind
 “ by wicked works, he hath reconciled in
 “ the body of his flesh through death, to
 “ present them holy and unblameable and
 “ unproveable in his sight^x.” The practi-
 cal conclusion is drawn by the Apostle, and

^s Romans v. 6—1 .

^t 2 Cor. v. 19.

^u Romans iii. 23, 24,

^v Ephes. i. 6, 7.

^x Coloss. i. 21, 22.

is certainly not of an immoral tendency :
“ Having boldness, brethren, to enter into
“ the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a
“ new and living way, which he hath con-
“ secrated for us, through the veil, that is
“ to say, his flesh ; and having an high
“ priest over the house of God ; let us draw
“ near with a true heart in full assurance
“ of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from
“ an evil conscience, and our bodies wash-
“ ed with pure water. Let us hold fast the
“ profession of our faith without wavering,
“ (for he is faithful that promised ;) and let
“ us consider one another to provoke unto
“ love and to good works : not forsaking the
“ assembling of ourselves together, as the
“ manner of some is, but exhorting one an-
“ other : and so much the more, as ye see
“ the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully
“ after that we have received the knowledge
“ of the truth, there remaineth no more sa-
“ crifice for sins, but a certain fearful look-
“ ing for of judgment and fiery indignation,
“ which shall devour the adversaries .”

5. The Unitarian asserts, that “ it is principally, if not solely, upon the employment of” the word *εντρογχανω*, “ that the strange idea is founded, that Jesus is now employed in interceding with God for his saints :” and he is “ not aware how this can be shown to be consistent with the doctrine, that Jesus made a full satisfaction to God for the sins of men^z.” “ ‘ The perpetual intercession of Christ here noted,’ says Mr. Lindsey, Seq. p. 88. ‘ note, ‘ may perhaps be the continual operation and effect of his miracles and doctrine in the world, by which men are brought to believe in God by him, and to be saved.’ Perhaps it may mean,” the editors of the Improved Version continue, “ that Christ is exerting his powers in some unknown way for the benefit of his Church :” or, as they express themselves in another passage, with less diffidence, but with equal indecision, the word “ no doubt means, that Christ, in his present exalted state, is in some way or other

^z Carpenter, p. 201. note.

“ employed for the benefit of his Church. “ But these passages,” those in which the word *εντυγχανω* occurs, “ lay no just foundation for the commonly received opinions “ concerning the intercession of Christ;” and give “ no countenance to the custom “ of offering prayers to God through the intercession of Christ^a.” Yet are our custom and our opinions justified by the recorded precept and promise of the Lord himself, that we should ask the Father in his name^b; by the known prayers and thanksgivings of his Apostles through Jesus Christ^c; and by the prescription of our duty “ to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through “ Jesus Christ^d.” He hath entered into the holy places, “ to appear in the presence of “ God for us;” by virtue of his unchangeable priesthood, “ he is able also to save to the “ uttermost them that come unto God by “ him, seeing he ever liveth to make inter-

^a Improved Version. Notes on Heb. vii. 25. Romans viii. 34.

^b John xiv. 13, 14. xv. 16. xvi. 23. ^c Romans i. 8. vii. 25. ^d 1 Peter ii. 5. Ephes. v. 20. Heb. xiii. 15.

^e Heb. ix. 24.

“cession for them^f :” for he “died, yea rather, he is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us^g :” so that “if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins^h.”

There is therefore nothing, which is common to our belief, and that of the Unitarian, concerning the Person and Office of Christ. We believe, what he controverts and denies, that Jesus Christ is our Mediator and Intercessor with the Father; that he is the propitiation for our sins, and that his blood is the price of our redemption; and that he, who for our sakes was born of the Virgin Mary, preexisted from eternity, and was in the beginning with God, and was God. Proceed we to inquire, whether the articles of our faith concerning the Holy Spirit are more reconcilable with that of the Unitarian.

6. “It is, I believe, the general belief of

^f Hebrews vii. 25. ^g Romans viii. 34. ^h 1 John ii.

“ Unitarians, that the Holy Ghost, more
 “ properly the Holy Spirit, in all cases
 “ means the Spirit of God ; that whenever
 “ it is spoken of in the New Testament, it
 “ is spoken of as miraculous. In fine, the
 “ Unitarian Christian believes, that the
 “ Holy Spirit means the preternatural a-
 “ gency of God, to authenticate a revela-
 “ tion from God ; he connects the one
 “ event with the other, and believes, that
 “ when the effect was produced the ope-
 “ ration of the cause ceasedⁱ.” “ The Uni-
 “ tarians do not believe in the personal
 “ existence of the Holy Spirit as a Being
 “ distinct from the Supreme^k ;” but that
 “ the Holy Ghost, more properly the Holy
 “ Spirit, means the Spirit of God, and con-
 “ sequently in all cases either God him-
 “ self, or his energy^l.” In refutation of
 these positions, we maintain that the Holy
 Spirit is divine, because not only by impli-
 cation and inference^m, but positively and
 directly he is called Lord and Godⁿ. We

ⁱ Estlin, p. 77. ^k Belsham's Letters to the Bishop of London, p. 10. ^l Estlin, p. 40.

^m Acts v. 3. 4. ⁿ 1 Cor. xii. 5. 6.

maintain, that he is possessed of a personal existence, without which the diversities of gifts, administrations and operations^o, would be most unsuitably appropriated to him, nor could he be in his attributes eternal^p, nor in his actions capable of willing, and distributing according to his will^q; of coming or of being sent^r; of searching and knowing all things, even the deep things of God^s; of testifying of Christ^t; of teaching all things, and bringing all things to the remembrance of his Disciples^u; or of speaking, hearing, and shewing things to come^x. We maintain also, that he is distinct from the Father, because it was through the Spirit that Christ offered himself without spot to God^y; because it is through the Spirit that we have access unto the Father by the Son^z; because the Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him^a; and because God hath sent

^o 1 Cor. xii. 4—11. ^p Hebrews ix. 14. ^q 1 Cor. xii. 11. ^r John xiv. 26. xv. 26. xvi. 7. 8. 13. ^s 1 Cor. ii. 10. 11. ^t John xv. 26. ^u John xiv. 26. 1 Cor. ii. 13. Luke xii. 12. ^x John xvi. 13. ^y Hebrews ix. 14. ^z Ephes. ii. 18. ^a Luke xi. 13.

“forth the Spirit of his Son^b,” at whose baptism the Spirit visibly descended upon him, and the voice of the Father was heard from heaven^c. We maintain the perpetuity of his operations in the hearts of the faithful, for “the Spirit helpeth our infirmities^d ;” and through his power we “are bound in hope^e,” and our mortal bodies are quickened^f and made alive; because “no man can say that Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Ghost^g,” and because we are forbidden to quench^h and to grieveⁱ the Holy Spirit; which are offences that could not be committed, if his operations were exclusively miraculous.

Thus do we believe and profess, in opposition to the Unitarian, that the Holy Spirit is Lord and God; that he possesses personal offices and attributes; that he is distinct from the Father; and that his operations in the hearts of the faithful are perpetual and without end.

^b Galat. iv. 6. ^c Matt. iii. 16. 17. Luke iii. 22.
^d Rom. viii. 26. ^e Rom. xv. 13. ^f Rom. viii. 11.
^g 1 Cor. xii. 3. ^h 1 Thess. v. 19. ⁱ Ephes. iv. 30.

7. Concerning the condition of man, Unitarians assert that “ the words original sin and human depravity are not to be found in Scripture. They venture an opinion, that the ideas which they are intended to convey are not included in any word or passage which is there to be found, nor inferible from any doctrine there laid down ;^k” nevertheless, “ they rely for the pardon of sin on infinite mercy . . . they disclaim all human merit as much as their opponents !”

8. “ Unitarians discover no evidence of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments ^m :” “ they do not assume it as a principle, that all the books contained even in the volume of the New Testament are truly and equally inspired ⁿ .” In their judgment, “ the writers of the New Testament are to be regarded only as faithful, well-informed, and credible reporters of facts and

^k Estlin, p. 81. Belsham’s Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 34. 60. ^l Estlin, p. 71. ^m Belsham’s Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 11. ⁿ Ibid. p. 58.

“doctrines, who lay no claim to im-
 “diate supernatural suggestion for what
 “they indited or wrote^o.”

9. “The Unitarians, I believe, universally
 “reject the horrible doctrine of the future
 “eternal torments of the wicked; and ma-
 “ny, but not all, believe that future pu-
 “nishment will be remedial^p.” They con-
 “sider the Devil, “not a real, but a hypo-
 “thetical and fictitious being, the principle
 “of evil personified, the supposed cause
 “of evil^q.” and a reference of the Apostle
 to principalities and powers suggests an an-
 notation, that this reference “gives no
 “countenance either to the commonly re-
 “ceived opinion of the existence of a ce-
 “lestial hierarchy, or the popular doctrine
 “of the superiority of Christ to angels and
 “other supposed celestial spirits^r.” An-
 other Unitarian writer, however, cursorily
 admits that there are “superior intelli-
 “gences, whom the Supreme Being em-

^o Belsham's Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 59. ^p Ibid. p. 11. Estlin, p. 82. ^q Improved Version. Note on 1 John iii. 8. et pass. Estlin, p. 82. ^r Improved Version. Note on Ephes. i. 21.

“ ploys as the special messengers of his
“ designs ^s.”

10. Unmoved by this or any other contradiction to our faith, we fear not to make our confession in the words of Scripture. We know that we have an “ adversary, the
“ Devil, who, as a roaring lion, walketh
“ about, seeking whom he may devour ^t.” We know that “ the wicked shall go into
“ everlasting punishment, and the right-
“ eous into life eternal ^u.” We know that
“ holy men of God spake as they were
“ moved by the Holy Ghost ^x ;” that all Scripture is of Divine inspiration ^y, and that Saint Paul was scrupulous in distinguishing what he wrote with the Lord, from that which he wrote without the Lord ^z. We know that “ in Adam all sin-

^s Carpenter, p. 204. 257. So the Editors of the Improved Version commenting on Hebrews ii. 5. admit “ the ambiguity of the word angel, ch. i. 7.” and speak of “ angels considered as beings of an order superior to
“ mankind.”

^t 1 Peter v. 8. Ephes. vi. 11. 16. ^u Matt. xxv. 46.
εις κολασιν ΑΙΩΝΙΟΝ, εις ζωην ΑΙΩΝΙΟΝ. ^x 2 Pet. i. 21.
^y 2 Tim. iii. 16. ^z 1 Cor. vii. 6. 10. 12. 25. 40.

“ ned,” that all died, and were constituted sinners^a; that all have “ come short of the “ glory of God^b ;” and that all the world is “ guilty before God,” or liable to his judgments^c. We know that the Holy Spirit is Lord and God^d. We know that Jesus Christ is a “ propitiation for our sins^e ;” that “ he suffered the just for the unjust^f ,” and was “ crucified for us^g .” We know that he was born “ of the seed of David ” in the flesh^h ; that what was conceived of Mary the Virgin was of the Holy Ghostⁱ ; that “ he is Lord of all^k ;” and that he “ is over all, God blessed for evermore^l .” We know that God loved us, and sent his Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved^m ; and as men that have been baptized “ in the name of the “ Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy “ Ghostⁿ ,” we acknowledge “ the mystery

^a Rom. v. 12. 17. 18. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 22. 2 Cor. v. 14.

^b Rom. iii. 23. ^c Rom. iii. 19. ^d 1 Cor. xii. 5. 6.

^e 1 John ii. 2. iv. 10. ^f 1 Peter iii. 18. ^g 1 Cor. v. 7.

^h Rom. i. 3. ⁱ Matt. i. 20. Luke i. 35. ^k Acts x. 36.

^l Rom. ix. 5. ^m John iii. 16. 17. 1 John iv. 9. 10.

ⁿ Matt. xxviii. 19.

“ of God, and of the Father, and of Christ^o”
 “ ... through whom we have access by one
 “ Spirit unto the Father^p.” This is our
 faith which is established on the authority
 which the Apostles possessed, for “ casting
 “ down imaginations,” or reasonings, “ and
 “ every high thing that exalteth itself a-
 “ gainst the knowledge of God, and” for
 “ bringing into captivity every thought to
 “ the obedience of Christ^q.”

Very opposite is the Creed of the Unitarian, whose profession is, “ that the God
 “ and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is
 “ alone possessed of the essential attributes
 “ of divinity, and that to him alone reli-
 “ gious worship is due^r.” and that Jesus
 was “ truly and properly a man, and as to
 “ nature no more^s.” “ The Unitarians be-
 “ lieving Christ to be a mere human being
 “ ... of course deny the commonly received
 “ doctrine of the Atonement, and they con-
 “ ceive that the death of Christ is no where
 “ represented in the Scriptures as an ex-

^o Coloss. ii. 2. ^p Ephes. ii. 18. ^q 2 Cor. x. 5.

^r Carpenter, p. 99. ^s Ibid. p. 123.

“ piatory sacrifice for human guilt, as ap-
 “ peasing the wrath of God, as a satisfac-
 “ tion to Divine justice, or as a vicarious
 “ suffering for the transgressions of man-
 “ kind^t.” They “ do not believe in the
 “ personal existence of the Holy Spirit, as
 “ a Being distinct from the Supreme^u.”
 “ They reject the doctrine of the Trinity,
 “ of the Creation of the universe by Jesus
 “ Christ, of the Incarnation, of the Atone-
 “ ment, . . . and other popular doctrines
 “ connected with these^x.” They renounce
 “ the heart-withering, the gloomy doctrine
 “ of eternal torments^y :” and while they
 acknowledge not “ the plenary inspiration
 “ of the Scriptures^z,” they believe “ the
 “ Bible only to be the religion of Protest-
 “ ants, and resting on this solid principle,”
 they dare not “ allow any human autho-
 “ rity in matters of religion^a.” In this
 creed it is contended, that there are “ no

^t Belsham’s Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 10. Estlin,
 p. 81. ^u Belsham, Estlin, ubi supra. ^x Belsham’s
 Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 34. ^y Improved Version.
 Notes on Rev. xiv. 11. xx. 10. ^z Belsham, ubi supra.
^a Estlin, p. 37.

“mysteries^b” although it is acknowledged, that there are difficulties which cannot be immediately removed^c, and in the investigation of this their faith, they “do not affect to approach the oracles of truth with any prostration of the understanding.” If ever they should be charged with admitting as a revealed truth . . . a proposition which previously to its reception required a prostration of the understanding,” they would regard it as “a calamity more absurd and more injurious than any which the malignity and ingenuity of” their “bitterest adversaries have ever yet invented^d.”

The challenge of the Unitarian has been accepted; the rules which he has prescribed for the contest have been observed, and all which he asks has been conceded^e. Our faith has been delivered in the words of Scripture; his doctrine has been pre-

^b Belsham's Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 61. 69.

^c Belsham's Lett. to the Unitarian Christians of South Wales, p. 22. Carpenter, p. 225. 260. 264. ^d Belsham's Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 75. ^e Estlin, p. 37. Belsham's Lett. to the Bp. of London, p. 83.

sented in the terms which have been used by its ablest and most accomplished advocates. The argument has not been disguised by any allusion to the conduct of less cautious or less skilful polemics, nor incumbered by a reference to the vain suspicions of the integrity or conjectural emendations of the Sacred Text; to the unauthorized translation of its words, or the tortuous interpretation of its sense; to the contradiction and disagreement of Unitarian commentators with themselves and with each other; to their confident anticipations of ultimate success; to their insinuations on the probity of their adversaries, and the imputation of interested motives, which induce a tacit acquiescence in error, or prevent a manly investigation of the truth.

These disingenuous arts of controversy need not at this time or in this place to be exposed, where all of critical and theological erudition has been brought to bear in the defence of the truth. The little which has been done upon the present occasion may serve as a specimen of the errors

which our younger brethren will be called to encounter in their future life, and of the power and strength of the instruments with which effectual resistance must be made. Let the inexperienced not scorn the word of exhortation, nor deem it an unjust restraint on the ardent curiosity of the inquisitive, or on the sanguine zeal of the faithful, if they be dissuaded from examining the mazes of Unitarian theology, even for the purpose of disentangling them, without having acquired a competence of scriptural knowledge, and from penetrating the labyrinth without bearing the thread always in their hands. Let it not be offensive to recommend a prudent caution in the exposition of what we conceive to be the truth, that there be no occasion given to the adversary, of which he will not fail to avail himself^f in reproaching the righteous cause, and fastening upon our common faith the private errors of the individual.

Now may the God in whose name we have been baptized, the Father, the Son,

^f Carpenter, p. 345, 346.

and the Holy Spirit, enable us to hold fast and without wavering the profession of our faith: may he preserve us in constant adherence to the great "mystery of godliness," and from all temptation to deny "the Lord who bought" us, to disparage his nature, or depreciate his office. May we learn to "honour the Son even as we honour the Father," and to believe in Christ as we "believe in God." In Christ, "though now we see him not, yet believing," may we always "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," until in the fulness of time, the veil of mystery shall be removed from every eye, and "we shall see him as he is," and "receive the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls,"

SERMON III.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE MODERN CALVINISTS
COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

ACTS xx. 27—30.

I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

IT was the strict law of righteousness, which was delivered to the Jews, that they should do all which was “written in the “book of the law of Moses, and turn not “aside from it either to the right hand or “to the left^a.” The law was worthy to

^a Joshua xxiii. 6.

be delivered by a Governor whose wisdom is infinite, and to be received by a people who were placed in a condition of servitude to fulfil the pleasure of his will.

The rule which was addressed to the Jews with the absolute authority of the supreme Governor, is recommended to Christians as a measure of necessary prudence in doing all things which Christ hath commanded. It is in merciful accommodation to our infirmities that we are taught to “make straight paths for our feet, that that which is lame may not be turned out of the way, but rather that it be healed^b,” that our natural weakness may not be inflamed nor aggravated by treading in intricate paths, or by neglecting the highway in which the weakest traveller may pursue his journey in safety and with success. To facilitate the means of salvation, the “workman that needeth not to be ashamed,” will rightly divide “the word of truth^c;” he will sow the good seed in such straight and even furrows,

^b Heb. xii. 13.

^c 2 Tim. ii. 15.

that the roots may strike deep in their proper soil, and the fruits be matured without prejudice to each other, that every precept and every doctrine may be established in the heart, and the analogy of the whole Christian dispensation may be seen in a life of consistent obedience.

The error which is in opposition to this wholesome practice of the skilful teacher is foretold by St. Paul in his address to the elders of the Church of Ephesus: “ I have
“ not shunned to declare unto you all the
“ counsel of God. Take heed therefore
“ unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over
“ the which the Holy Ghost hath made you
“ overseers, to feed the Church of God,
“ which he hath purchased with his own
“ blood. For after my departing, I know
“ that grievous wolves shall enter in among
“ you, not sparing the flock. Also of your
“ own selves shall men arise, speaking per-
“ verse things, to draw away disciples after
“ them^d.” The offence of these men who
should arise from their body, and draw

^d Acts xx. 27—30.

away disciples after them, was not the denial of any Christian truth, or the introduction of any peculiar heresy, but the “speaking perverse things,” things perverted from their natural, their plain and direct sense and interpretation. This prophecy may have been in the course of fulfilment when Timothy was appointed to the superintendence of the Church of Ephesus, that he might charge some^e not to teach doctrine strange or foreign to that of the Apostles. The offender is thus described^f. If any man deliver strange doctrine, and “consent not to wholesome “ words, even the words of our Lord Jesus “ Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions “ and strifes of words.” This offence of perverting the truth is also insisted on by Saint Peter, in whose time it had probably spread widely in the Church, and who, in speaking of the subjects discussed

^e 1 Tim. i. 3. μη ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν. ^f 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4. εἰ τις ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖ.

in the Epistles of Saint Paul, says, that in them “are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest,” or break as a limb upon a wheel, “as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.” The remedy which he prescribes for this practice is this: “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing that ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away by the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christg.”

From the descriptions which the Apostles have given of these men, whose offence they foretold and lived to censure, it appears, that they were themselves members of the Church, that they were under the control of the governors of the Church, and that in this capacity they nevertheless laboured to draw away disciples after them. Their offence was, that they uttered perverse things, that they wrested the Scrip-

tures from their natural meaning, and that in this manner they especially treated the things hard to be understood in the Epistles of Saint Paul. What were the things hard to be understood, or to which of the Epistles allusion is principally made, it is vain to conjecture; but on a reference to the Epistle to the Ephesians, to whose perverting elders the prophecy was originally addressed, it is impossible to overlook the doctrines of Predestination and Election^h, of the common condition of all men by nature as the children of wrathⁱ, of their regeneration, or being quickened together with Christ^k, and of the salvation which is by grace through faith^l. From the earnestness with which the Apostle insists upon these doctrines it may be inferred, that they were especially liable to be perverted by the Ephesians; and it may have been one of the objects of his addressing this Epistle to them, to correct their misapprehension, and to communicate to them sound

^h Ephes. i. 4, 5, 6. ⁱ Ibid. ii. 3. ^k Ibid. ii. 5. ^l Ibid. ii. 8.

knowledge and instruction on these articles of their Christian faith.

It will not be denied, that these doctrines are hard to be understood, that they have often been perverted, and that whenever they are made to rest on a scriptural foundation, they are enforced almost exclusively on the authority of Saint Paul. In comparing with the general tenor of the Scriptures the doctrines of Original Sin, of Free-will, Regeneration, Salvation by Faith through grace, Election, and Predestination, as they are maintained by their advocates in the present day, it will appear, that they are appropriately designated in the Apostle's prophecy, as doctrines strange, and perverted from his meaning.

I. Of these principles, which are supposed to be "of primary and fundamental importance^m," the first in order is "the universal and extreme sinfulnessⁿ," "the universally guilty, depraved, condemned,

^m Appeal to Men of Wisdom and Candour, by the Rev. C. Simeon, p. 17.

ⁿ Some Account of the Rev. Tho. Robinson, by the Rev. E. T. Vaughan, p. 64.

“and helpless state of man^o,” his “total^p,” “radical, and fundamental depravity^q.” In the language of modern Calvinists, man is represented to be “a fallen creature, guilty, “polluted, helpless^r,” “utterly undone^s,” “all depraved^t,” having “entirely lost the “perfection of his nature^u,” and “an effectual or prevailing inclination to good^x :” he is “in a state of guilt and sinful imbecility^y,” “wholly corrupt, utterly impotent, under the wrath of God, and liable “to everlasting torments^z.” In these expressions it is not meant, “that men may “not be comparatively good by nature^a ;”

^o The Calvinistic Clergy defended, and the Doctrines of Calvin maintained, in a Letter to the Rev. J. Beresford, by E. T. Vaughan. 2d edit. p. 85.

^p A Defence of Modern Calvinism, by Edward Williams, D. D. p. 514. Vaughan’s Account, p. 303.

^q Overton’s True Churchman ascertained, p. 134.

^r Simeon, p. 18. ^s Vaughan’s Account, p. 364.

^t Ibid. p. 356. Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism, by Thomas Scott, Rector of Aston Sandford. Vol. ii. p. 581.

^u Williams, p. 6. Simeon, p. 19.

^x Williams, p. 19. ^y Ibid. p. 202. ^z Overton, p. 157.

^a Simeon, p. 19. Williams, p. 10, 11.

or that they may not be “morally good,
 “not merely in comparison of others, but,
 “to a certain degree, really and substan-
 “tially so^b.” It is meant, that “no man
 “by nature is spiritually good, or good
 “towards God^c. No man by nature loves
 “God, or delights himself in God. No
 “one has by nature what I may call a
 “creature-like spirit towards him. No one
 “feels his obligation towards him as his
 “Creator, or places implicit confidence in
 “him as his Preserver, or rejoices in him as
 “his Benefactor, or delights to execute his
 “will as his Governor, or labours to approve
 “himself to him as his Judge^d.” “So
 “neither have we, what, if we may be al-
 “lowed the expression, we would call a
 “sinner-like spirit a spirit of humili-
 “ation is never found, but as it is infused
 “into the soul by the Spirit of God^e.”
 “Connected with this want of a sinner-like
 “spirit is a love of sin in all its branches;”
 and although “there is not in every man

^b Simeon, p. 19.

^c See Overton, p. 149. Scott, vol. ii. p. 541.

^d Simeon, p. 20. ^e Ibid. p. 21.

“ the same predominance of sin in all its
 “ branches, the same propensity there is, an
 “ aversion to what is good, and, in conse-
 “ quence of that, an incapacity to engage
 “ successfully in the prosecution or per-
 “ formance of any good thing^f.” This in-
 “ capacity arises “ altogether from the in-
 “ veteracy of our love to sin, and the total
 “ alienation of our hearts from what is truly
 “ good . . . not from any want of physical
 “ powers, but of moral and spiritual dis-
 “ positions^g.” These are not the “ un-
 “ guarded and crude representations^h,”
 nor “ the rash unqualified assertions of the
 “ inexperienced,” but the calm and deli-
 berate statements of “ those who promul-
 gate truth in its more sober and mea-
 sured formsⁱ.” From these we appeal to
 the authority of the Scriptures.

It is a true and faithful saying, which
 may not be disputed or denied, that “ in
 “ Adam all died^k,” that in him “ all sinned^l,”
 and that by the disobedience of this one

^f Simeon, p. 22. ^g Ibid. p. 23, 24. ^h Williams, p. 9.
ⁱ Siméon, p. 18. ^k 1 Cor. xv. 22. ^l Romans v. 12.

“ man the many were made sinners, and
“ judgment came upon all men to condemn-
“ ation^m.” We cannot therefore deny, that
the corruption of human nature is univer-
sal, though we would measure the degree
of it in individuals, and deny that every
man is “ altogether polluted in every fa-
“ culty of his soul, and destitute of all true
“ goodnessⁿ.” On the texts which are
alleged in vindication of this doctrine it
may be remarked, that they are rather the
descriptions of particular times and places,
than of the general state and condition of
mankind. Such is the character which is
given of the men immediately before the
deluge, when “ God saw that the wickedness
“ of man was great in the earth, and that the
“ whole imagination,” the purposes, and de-
sires of his heart “ was only evil continually^o.”
Such is also the report of the Psalmist con-
cerning the iniquity of the times in which
he lived, and bare the testimonies which are
recited by the Apostle^p, in proof that all

^m Romans v. 18, 19. ⁿ Simeon, p. 19. ^o Genesis
vi. 5. ^p Romans iii. 10—18.

were “under sin,” and liable to the judgment of God, a condition which is established beyond controversy, but which does not imply the total corruption of individuals. These two descriptions are evidently liable to exceptions; for David dwells on the practices and habits and consolations of many righteous men whom he had known^q; and Moses testifies of Noah, that he “found
“ grace in the eyes of the Lord, and was
“ a just man and perfect in his generation,
“ and Noah walked with God^r.”

That the desire of the flesh should be death and enmity with God^s, proves the fatal consequences of sin, and the righteousness of God; but it has no more reference to the universal depravity of human nature, than the opposite character of being heavenly-minded has to its universal integrity and incorruption: and when the Apostle speaks of the foolishness of the natural man, and his incompetence to know “the things

^q Psal. i. v. 12, 13. xv. xvi. 3. xxiv. xxxvii. 30—35. xli. 1, 2. cxii. cxxviii. ^r Genesis vi. 9. ^s Romans viii. 6, 7.

“of the Spirit of God^t,” he contrasts his condition with that of the spiritual man, and presses the advantages of the latter, without aggravating the infirmities of the former.

The description of the Gentiles, who “walked according to the course of this “world,” may be applied to the description of every state of heathenism; and when it is added that the Jews were “by nature “children of wrath even as others^u,” their liability to judgment, but not the extent of their corruption, is asserted. Here again the descriptions are not general, but appropriated to men under particular circumstances and conditions, in which we are taught to believe that there have been many happy and honourable exceptions^v.

From these perverted texts, let us turn and examine the language of Him who “knew all men, and needed not that any “should testify of man, for he knew what “was in man^x.” Did not he then speak of an “honest and good heart^y?” Did he

^t 1 Cor. ii. 14. ^u Ephes. ii. 2, 3. ^v Matt. viii. 11. xii. 41, 42. ^x John ii. 24, 25. ^y Luke viii. 15.

not anticipate the reward of the “good
 “and faithful servant^z?” Did he not ac-
 tually commend the faith of the good cen-
 turion, and of the woman of Canaan, and
 speak of many who should “come from
 “the east and from the west, and sit down
 “with Jacob and Isaac in the kingdom of
 “God^a? What was his reputed father but
 a righteous man^b? Who were they that
 blessed him in the temple, and rejoiced in
 his birth, but Simeon who “was just and
 “devout,” and Anna who “served God
 “with fastings night and day^c?” Among
 his disciples were Nathanael, the “Israelite
 “indeed, in whom there was no guile^d,”
 and Cornelius, the centurion, “a devout
 “man, that feared God with all his house,
 “and gave much alms to the people al-
 “ways, and whose prayers and whose alms
 “went up for a memorial before God^e.”
 Among the worthies of the Old Testament
 were Job, a man “perfect and upright,
 “and one that feared God and eschew-

^z Matt. xxv. 21. ^a Luke vii. 9. Matt. xv. 28. viii. 11.
 Mark vii. 29. ^b Matt. i. 19. ^c Luke ii. 25. 37. ^d John
 i. 47. ^e Acts x. 2. 4.

“ed evil^f;” Enoch, “who walked with
 “God, and pleased him^g;” Abel, “who
 “obtained testimony that he was right-
 “eous^h;” and Hezekiah, who “did what
 “was right in the sight of the Lord, and
 “clave to the Lord, and departed not from
 “following him, but kept his command-
 “ments which the Lord commandedⁱ.”

It would be pleasing to dwell on the history of many, whose names have been written in the book of life, and whose known characters and circumstances were such as at least to inspire a cautious hesitation before we can with “the Calvinists
 “think it more scriptural and more ra-
 “tional to ascribe the different degrees of
 “fruitfulness attending the preached Gos-
 “pel to divine gracious agency, than to
 “virtuous qualities possessed by the hu-
 “man race in different degrees indepen-
 “dently of that agency^k.” They certainly cannot be reconciled with the doctrine of such an “entire ruin of the whole human
 “race” in Adam, as means “infinite guilt,

^f Job i. 1. ^g Gen. v. 24. Heb. xi. 5. ^h Heb. xi. 4.

ⁱ 2 Kings xviii. 3. 6.

^k Williams, p. 13. 286.

“ consummate depravity, everlasting dam-
 “ nation, and unqualified helplessness,” in
 “ every human being, existent between
 “ Adam’s fall and Christ’s coming to judg-
 “ ment¹.”

II. Although “ no *defection* or *infection*
 “ of our nature deprives man either of his
 “ physical powers or of his uncontrolled
 “ freedom to act according to the dictates
 “ of his own mind, and the obligation
 “ to act aright therefore continues unim-
 “ paired^m ;” yet is a “ negative principle
 “ of defectibilityⁿ” imputed to the human
 will, and its freedom is pronounced to be
 no more than a “ negation of all foreign
 “ interference in its exercise^o.” It should
 however be noticed, that “ modern Calvin-
 “ ists do not cashier from their system the
 “ exercise of reason and free will ; they con-
 “ sider reason as the faculty which compares
 “ ideas, and the will as free in all its elections ;
 “ they maintain that these faculties were first

¹ Vaughan’s Lett. p. 84. 2d ed. ^m Williams, p. 175.

ⁿ Ibid. p. 399. 505. 509. 513. ^o Ibid. p. 485. 22. 225.

“ Man, neither constrained nor restrained by God’s im-
 “ mediate agency, chooses to transgress and give place to
 “ the devil.” *Vaughan’s Letter*, 2d ed. p. 81.

“ given and are still continued to man in
“ order to be exercised; that, when exer-
“ cised aright, they answer the important
“ end of promoting the impression which
“ the truths of the Gospel make upon the
“ minds of men, and that in this respect
“ the impression depends upon the manner
“ in which they attend to them^p.” They
are also far from discarding “ the use of
“ divinely instituted means, especially at-
“ tention to preaching, and a believing
“ regard to the testimony of God in his
“ word^q.” At the same time they dare
not to concede “ that a good impression
“ of divine truth on the human mind de-
“ pends exclusively on the exercise of rea-
“ son and free will^r;” and “ in those in-
“ stances wherein the heart is made sus-
“ ceptible of good impressions, through
“ the intervention of truth and free will,”
they “ acknowledge the operation of dis-
“ criminating grace^s.”

Whatever may be the accuracy of this

^p Williams, p. 24. ^q Ibid. p. 27. Scott, vol. i. p. 34.
vol. ii. p. 32. ^r Williams, p. 25. ^s Ibid. p. 27. Scott,
vol. i. p. 86.

description of the freedom of the human will, it is hard to reconcile “the negative “principle of defectibility,” which pervades the whole Calvinistic system, with those precepts of the Old Testament in which the Jews are directed to choose between good and evil^t, or with those invitations of the Gospel^u, in which Christ refers to the willingness of the individual to accept them; so that if any man would know of the doctrine whether it be of God, he must be willing to do the will of the Father^v.

III. From this description of the freedom of the will, which is less frequently and formally insisted upon, it is necessary to proceed to the more popular and the more elaborate doctrine of divine grace, and to state what modern Calvinists maintain, and what they do not maintain, concerning its primary communication, its operation, and properties.

^t Deut. xxx. 19. Joshua xxiv. 15. See also Luke x. 42. Heb. xi. 25. ^u Matt. xvi. 24, 25. Mark viii. 34. Luke ix. 23. *Εἰ τις θέλει*. The authorized version according to the modern use of the words, expresses only the futurity, not the volition.

^v John vii. 17.

1. “The Calvinists do not maintain, “that grace, in every acceptation of the “word, is irresistible^x;” and they “utterly “disclaim the notion of compulsory force^y.” In relation to the new birth, they “require “nothing sudden^z;” and they deny that they “ever speak of it as wrought by an “irresistible impulse of the Spirit, without “the cooperation of the man himself^a.” they profess “that no Christian ought to expect

^x Williams, p. 55. ^y Ibid. p. 295. “The frequent occurrence of *compulsory* and *irresistible*, not as quoted from our writings, for we disclaim both the words and the ideas, but erroneously ascribed to us, tends to make the reader suppose that we mean something different from what we really do.” Scott, vol. i. p. 137. 92. 139. vol. ii. p. 211. 245.

^z Simeon, p. 36. ^a Ibid. Compare Scott, vol. i. p. 80—90. “‘That which is born of the Spirit is spirit,’ and with ‘that which is born of God’ the Holy Spirit cooperates to render it victorious; but not with the unrenewed hearts of sinners; or with the flesh, which will never concur and cooperate in its own crucifixion.” p. 81. “If in producing the willing mind to turn to God, the sinner’s cooperation with God be admitted, not only is the glory divided between two agents, and boasting introduced, but the will of man takes the lead, and seems entitled to the precedency.” p. 85.

“ a private revelation of any new truths,
 “ which are not revealed^b” in the Scriptures;
 they “ acknowledge no sinless obedience
 “ except the Redeemer’s^c ;” nor do they
 approve of what “ some of the ancient
 “ Calvinists have advanced about incorri-
 “ gible pollution and inevitable wickedness
 “ in the reprobate^d.”

2. In the judgment of Calvinists, “ grace
 “ in the heart is a living principle, at the
 “ sovereign disposal of God ; and the exer-
 “ cise of this principle, when obtained, is
 “ as much our duty as it is to consult the
 “ preservation of our lives and of our fa-
 “ culties^e.” “ The means as such are suf-
 “ ficient, and such as becomes a moral
 “ governor to afford ; but the other kind
 “ of ability, which consists in a sincere

^b Williams, p. 297. Scott, vol. i. p. 60. 142.

^c Williams, p. 305. Scott, vol. i. p. 101.

^d Williams, p. 306. Scott, vol. i. p. 102. 163. vol. ii.
 p. 2.

^e Williams, p. 464. 291. “ Special grace, as far as it
 “ is vouchsafed efficaciously, leads men to improve every
 “ talent, and to employ aright every other gift of God.
 “ But what is there in fallen man which can improve as
 “ a talent the special grace of God.” Scott, vol. i. p. 66.

“ disposition to obey, proceeds from the
 “ sovereign grace of God, whereby we are,
 “ properly speaking, enabled to obey^f.”
 “ The operation is not merely external in
 “ the way of suasion, but internal^g,” or
 “ in the person himself^h ;” “ a physical
 “ operation, as contradistinguished from
 “ that which is moralⁱ.” “ The end of
 “ divine operations must be to producē a
 “ virtuous principle^k,” to ensure “ perse-
 “ vering obedience and well doing^l,” and
 “ the principle generated by divine ope-
 “ ration illuminates the mind, enabling it
 “ to discover the spiritual nature and su-

^f Williams, p. 471. 208. 34. Scott, vol. i. 61—63.

^g Williams, p. 33. ^h Ibid. p. 34. ⁱ Ibid. p. 34.

This “ term, physical operation, is used by Calvinists not
 “ to convey the idea of producing a superadded physical
 “ power or natural faculty, but to represent a positive
 “ and actual agency by the Holy Spirit, enabling the
 “ person to exercise the faculties he had before in a
 “ proper manner.” Williams, p. 34. Scott, vol. i. p. 31.
 So also “ preventing grace produces willingness, and
 “ whatever physical power we have of refusal, this will-
 “ ingness, when produced, is a moral inability to refuse
 “ it.” Scott, vol. ii. p. 601.

^k Williams, p. 35. ^l Ibid. p. 366. 506. Overton, p. 295.

“perior excellency^m—and real meaningⁿ—
 “of the truths revealed in the sacred Ora-
 “cles.” Calvinists “are constrained by
 “every consideration of the case . . . to
 “ascribe our possession of the living prin-
 “ciple of faith, as of every other internal
 “grace, to the inspiration of God’s Holy
 “Spirit, as the gift of the Mediator to the
 “members of his mystical body^o;” and
 “without grace in the heart, and without
 “a communication of that grace from
 “God, there could not be one virtuous
 “act, in the proper sense of this epithet,
 “among either men or angels^p.”

If there be no other objection to this account of the divine operations, and of their necessity, we cannot be expected to concur in attributing them to the sovereign grace, or saying that they are at the sovereign disposal of God, which seem to imply an arbitrary act in preference to the more evangelical doctrine, which ascribes the distribution of heavenly gifts to parental

^m Williams, p. 37. ⁿ Ibid. p. 297. ^o Ibid. p. 128.
 149. ^p Williams, p. 506.

love. “ If ye, being evil, know how to give
 “ good gifts to your children, how much
 “ more shall your heavenly Father give
 “ good things,” even “ the Holy Spirit, to
 “ them that ask him^q.” It is also “ because
 “ ye are sons, that God hath sent forth
 “ into your hearts the Spirit of his Son,
 “ not the spirit of fear or of bondage, but
 “ the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry,
 “ Abba, Father^r.”

Such expressions, and more might be re-
 cited, suffer us not to acquiesce in silence,
 when Calvinists^s, with less ambiguity and

^q Matt. vii. 11. Luke xi. 13. ^r Rom. viii. 14. 15.

Galat. iv. 6.

^s This is the language of Calvinists: the meaning which it is intended to convey requires explanation. Dr. Williams, in commenting upon the position of Bishop Tomline, that faith “ is a gift not bestowed arbitrarily, “ capriciously, or irrespectively,” observes: “ That the “ infinitely wise God should bestow a favour or do any “ thing else capriciously without reason, or irrespectively without a wise reference to a worthy end, is out of “ the question: for his Lordship must be too equitable “ to impute to Calvinists a sentiment which they utterly “ abhor. But they do avow the sentiment,” &c. as in the text. Mr. Scott says: “ The words arbitrarily and

reserve, adopting the language of their opponents, “ avow the sentiment, that his
 “ gifts, as distinguished from rewards, are
 “ bestowed *arbitrarily*, or according to his
 “ sovereign pleasure^t,” and that “ it is the
 “ prerogative of benevolence, grace, and
 “ mercy, to overlook worthiness in their
 “ objects ; and the measure of their exer-
 “ cise is adequately found in supreme wis-
 “ dom^u. It is also maintained, that to the
 question, “ Why should we suppose that

“ ‘ capriciously,’ in connection with the Lord’s decrees or
 “ dispensations, are used exclusively by the opponents
 “ of Calvinism, and are not found in the writings of
 “ Calvinists.” Vol. ii. p. 122. sec. 166. “ Arbitrary will,
 “ in the common use of words, means the will of one
 “ who is determined to have his own way, being pos-
 “ sessed of power to enforce his decisions. This in ge-
 “ neral is unreasonable, capricious, tyrannical : often in
 “ direct opposition to wisdom, justice, truth, goodness,
 “ or mercy. Such thoughts of God’s sovereignty were
 “ far removed from Calvin’s views of the subject, and so
 “ they are from ours.” Vol. ii. p. 4. See p. 89. 170. 653.
 “ Indeed the word ‘right’ is wholly improper to the sub-
 “ ject. . . it is unmeaning to speak of a right to do what
 “ it is impossible should ever be done.” Vol. ii. 168.

^t Williams, p. 151. ^u Ibid. p. 152. 188. Scott, vol. i.
 p. 104. vol. ii. p. 623.

“ God does more in the way of preventing
“ internal grace for some than for others,
“ while all in themselves are equally un-
“ deserving? the true answer is, Because
“ his favours are his own, and he has a
“ sovereign prerogative to do what he will
“ with his own^v ;” “ a sovereign or arbitra-
“ ry right to confer his favours on whom
“ he pleases, when all alike are destitute
“ of just claim^w ;” and that the influence
of this indefectible principle “ is no more
“ claimable by the creature than any
“ other favour which is not in fact granted
“ him^x .”

Claim we have none, and none we
urge, but through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom both Jews and Gentiles
“ have access by one Spirit unto the Fa-
“ ther^y .” It is on the authority of the
Scriptures that we believe that God, so far
from overlooking worthiness in the objects
of his mercy, “ resisteth the proud, and

^v Williams, p. 498. 503. Scott, vol. ii. p. 3. 35. 36.
543. ^w Williams, p. 180. Scott, vol. i. p. 105.

^x Williams, p. 257. ^y Eph. ii. 18.

“giveth grace unto the humble^z;” that his eyes “are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers, but” that his face “is against them that do evil^a.” If any man love Christ, he will keep his words, and the “Father will love him,” and, with the Son, “will come unto him,” and make his “abode with him^b.” So it is written, that God dwelleth with him “that is of a contrite and humble spirit, “to revive the spirit of the humble, and “to revive the heart of the contrite ones^c;” that he looketh “to him that is poor and “of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his “word^d.” The same truth is conveyed in the history and character of many who have been the especial objects of divine mercy, and is worthy to be received without limitation or restriction; for it is the declared will of God, that no man should perish, but that “all should come to repentance,” and “to the knowledge of “the truth,” and “be saved^e.”

^z 1 Pet. v. 5. ^a 1 Pet. iii. 12. ^b John xiv. 23.

^c Isaiah lvii. 15. ^d Isaiah lxvi. 2. ^e Ezek. xviii. 23. 32. xxxiii. 11. 1 Tim. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

3. Grace, in the language of Calvinists, is called *special*, “because that which is displayed in the Gospel objectively, which bringeth the tidings of salvation through Christ, has appeared to all men, is alike common to the converted and unconverted, to numbers who perish, as well as to those who are eventually saved. Consequently, that grace which causes the difference of result, must be subjective, or internal and special^f.” It would be easy to enlarge on the apparent subtlety and real confusion in this distinction of the grace of God, as it is shewn in the publication of the word, and the renewal of the heart. The doctrine of special grace is sufficiently declared in those texts, in which it is said, that “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit with^g,” that “grace is given to every one of us, according to the measure of the gift of Christ^h,” and that we have “gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,” and “according to the

^f Williams, p. 29. ^g 1 Cor. xii. 7. ^h Ephes. iv. 7.

“proportion of faithⁱ” or trust reposed in us.

4. Calvinists define conversion to be “an actual turning from vice to real virtue^k,” “a practical, radical, and general change of character^l,” derived from the agency of the Holy Spirit. It is the conversion of an “hereditary profession into actual practice and experience^m,” and not the conversion “of persons already called Christians to the profession of Christianityⁿ.” In its scriptural use, however, conversion does generally mean, the conversion of Jews and Gentiles from their hereditary profession to the belief and obedience of the Gospel^o: and the sense, which is now both arbitrarily and ambiguously imputed to it, is more properly expressed by repentance, as far as the individual, and by renovation, as far as the Holy Spirit is concerned^p.

ⁱ Rom. xii. 6. ^k Williams, p. 28. ^l Overton, p. 177. ^m Ibid. p. 161, 162. ⁿ Ibid.

^o Matt. xiii. 15. John xii. 40. Acts iii. 19. xi. 21. xiv. 15. xv. 3. xix. 26. xxvi. 18. 20. 2 Cor. iii. 16. 1 Thess. i. 9. 1 Peter ii. 25.

^p “Repentance or conversion (as it implies actively

5. Some Calvinists “ would not be sol-
 “ citous about the term regeneration, pro-
 “ vided the idea or scriptural truth, which”
 they “ mean to express by it, be allowed^q :”
 neither do they “ confound regeneration
 “ with conversion ; for by the former” they
 “ understand an immediate operation of
 “ God the Holy Ghost in the mind, but by
 “ the latter the voluntary act of the mind
 “ in turning from all forbidden objects and
 “ pursuits to God and holiness by Jesus
 “ Christ, as the consequence of regenera-
 “ tion^r. The important change expressed
 “ by regeneration is the work of God, and
 “ *may* take place in an infant ; but conver-
 “ sion implying a voluntary act upon con-
 “ viction, cannot take place in an infant
 “ mind^s.”

“ Modern Calvinists admit the term re-
 “ generation in three acceptations, princi-
 “ pally according to the connection : first,
 “ turning unto God) is wholly the act of the penitent :
 “ but to work in us both to will and to do is the act of
 “ God alone.” Scott, vol. i. p. 107.

^q Williams, p. 417.

^r See Scott, vol. i. p. 177.

^s Williams, p. 65.

“ as denoting figuratively baptism ; se-
 “ condly, the immediate effect of divine in-
 “ fluence upon the mind ; thirdly, the for-
 “ mation of Christian tempers and graces^t.”
 “ To limit either regeneration or conver-
 “ sion to any period of human life, or as
 “ the effect of any external rite, while the
 “ will of God is sovereign in dispensing
 “ blessings, and the will of man is free from
 “ constraint,” they “ regard as enthusias-
 “ tic^u.” Thus they “ use the word rege-
 “ neration, to express *something* different
 “ from baptism^x,” “ quite distinct and se-
 “ parable from baptism ;^y” and although
 in their judgment it can never “ be proved,
 “ that baptismal regeneration communi-
 “ cates quickening grace,^z” they never-
 theless concede, that “ baptism may be,
 “ but not without the voluntary concur-
 “ rence of the subject, the means of this
 “ regeneration, because it may be the
 “ occasion of forming knowledge, faith,

^t Williams, p. 64. ^u Ibid. p. 66. Compare Scott, vol.
 i. p. 162. ^x Williams, p. 63. ^y Vaughan's Account, p.
 308. ^z Williams, p. 79.

“charity, &c. in a mind born of the
“Spirit^a.”

What then, we ask, is the meaning of the unperverted doctrine of our Lord concerning the necessity of being “born of water and
“the Spirit^b?” or of that of his Apostle concerning the divine method of our salvation, through the laver “of regeneration and re-
“newal of the Holy Spirit^c?” or concerning Christ’s having sanctified his Church with the laver or “washing of water^d?” How is it that we “are all the children of
“God by faith in Jesus Christ,” but because “as many of us as have been baptized
“into Christ have put on Christ^e?” How is it that “we have all been baptized into
“one body, and made to drink into one
“Spirit^f?” or how, except in baptism, were the Corinthians “washed, sanctified,
“and justified in the name of the Lord
“Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God^g?” What is meant by God’s “giving the

^a Williams, p. 71. Simeon, p. 43.

^b John iii. 5.

^c Titus iii. 5.

^d Ephes. v. 26.

^e Galat. iii. 26, 27.

^f 1 Cor. xii. 13.

^g 1 Cor. vi. 11.

“earnest of the Spirit in our hearts^h,” by his having sealed them who believed in Christ with the “Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possessionⁱ?” or by our being “buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead^k?” When the texts which relate to baptism and to regeneration as distinct from renovation are examined with candour, and explained without perversion, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration shall be vindicated from every exception, and shewn not to depend on the force of “Jewish and Popish prejudices^l.”

6. “The Calvinists do not confound regeneration in any sense of the term with indefectible grace. If at any time they use the word indefectible as a property of grace, they distinguish between the act of

^h 2 Cor. i. 22. ⁱ Ephes. i. 13, 14. ^k Coloss. ii. 12.
Romans vi. 4. ^l Williams, p. 52.

“ generating grace as a principle of life, and
 “ its continuance without defection by di-
 “ vine support ^m.” “ The indefectibility
 “ of special grace, by which men become
 “ saints, is all which any contend for; and
 “ many of these would object to the term
 “ indefectible, as seeming to imply, that it
 “ was unfailing in its own nature, instead
 “ of being secured from failing by the pro-
 “ mises of the covenant of grace, and by
 “ the intercession of Christ ⁿ.” They “ be-
 “ lieve . . . that the living principle of faith,
 “ and the union from which it proceeds,
 “ never utterly forsake a person thus fa-
 “ voured, however partially foiled in an
 “ hour of temptation^o,” that “ the divine
 “ faithfulness of mercy shall be with ^p” him.
 The question, therefore, whether “ a person
 “ who was once dead to sin and alive to
 “ God, may fall from his justified state,
 “ depends upon the good pleasure of him

^m Williams, p. 71. ⁿ Scott, vol. i. p. 129. See also
 p. 171. 304. 305. 358. 359. vol. ii. p. 415. 481. 580.

^o Williams, p. 133. 124. Scott, vol. i. p. 100. vol. ii. p.
 479. ^p Williams, p. 134. Vaughan's Account, p. 371.

Compare Letter, p. 38. 224. 237. 2d edit.

“ who is his life, his righteousness, and
 “ strength, who can maintain and dissolve
 “ the union from whence his life and
 “ righteousness took their origin^q.” They
 “ believe that no elect person, no true be-
 “ liever is left thus to sin, and to live and
 “ die in sin. Either an uniform course of
 “ holy obedience, or deep repentance of
 “ any deviation from it, is inseparable in”
 their “ view from the doctrine of final per-
 “ severance^r.”

Without insisting on the tendency of this doctrine, we simply justify our rejection of it by reciting the admonitions of the Apostle: “ Be not high-minded, but fear^s.” “ Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall^t.” “ Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure^u.” The Apostle was apprehensive, lest, when he “ had preached to others, he himself “ should be a cast-away^x;” and lest the

^q Williams, p. 144. ^r Scott, vol. ii. p. 685. ^s Rom. xi. 20. ^t 1 Cor. x. 12. ^u Philip. ii. 12, 13. ^x 1 Cor. ix. 27.

Corinthians, who were standing in a state of salvation, should “ have believed in “ vain^y ;” and he was in doubt concerning the Galatians, whether they had not suffered for the truth in vain^z. He teaches us also, that it is not possible “ for those “ who were once enlightened, and have “ tasted of the heavenly gift, and were “ made,” or generated, “ partakers of the “ Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good “ word of God, and the powers of the “ world to come, if they shall fall away, to “ renew them again to repentance^a.” In the same spirit another Apostle hath written ; “ If after they have escaped the pol- “ lutions of the world through the know- “ ledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus “ Christ, they are again entangled therein, “ and overcome, the latter end is worse “ than the beginning. For it had been “ better for them not to have known the “ way of righteousness, than, after they have “ known it, to turn from the holy com- “ mandment delivered unto them^b.”

^y 1 Cor. xv. 2. ^z Galat. iii. 4. iv. 20. ^a Hebrews vi. 4, 5, 6. ^b 2 Peter ii. 20, 21.

7. “ When Calvinists maintain that grace
 “ is irresistible, they mean an inward prin-
 “ ciple of light and life . . . that grace as to
 “ use and exercise is irresistible by any
 “ thing without or within the mind” . . .
 When they “ plead for the irresistibility of
 “ grace, they take two things into the ac-
 “ count; 1st, the nature of that grace
 “ which they intend . . . the gracious ope-
 “ ration of the Holy Spirit producing a
 “ new heart or a right principle of action :
 “ 2dly, the will of God supporting and
 “ strengthening the principle, making it
 “ victorious over every difficulty^c,” “ effi-
 “ cacious, and victorious over the world,
 “ the flesh, and the devil, when God *pur-*
 “ *poses* that event, whatever momentary re-
 “ sistance may be ungratefully made^d.”

The Apostle hath delivered a different doctrine in the exhortations not to quench^e and not to grieve the Spirit, by which we have been “ sealed unto the day of re-

^c Williams, p. 56. Vaughan’s Letter, p. 37. 2d edit. Scott, vol. i. p. 124—128. ^d Williams, p. 296. Compare Vaughan’s Account, p. 173. ^e 1 Thess. v. 19.

“demption^f.” The first martyr also bore his testimony of the Jews, that they did always resist the Holy Spirit^g; and by this resistance they fulfilled the prophecy, and incurred the condemnation of our Lord: “This people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them^h.”

8. Calvinists also “hold the effects of divine operations to be sensible, in the acceptation of apprehensible, or that we may be conscious of effects which can be rationally ascribed to no other causeⁱ.” So when they “speak of experiences, related or written,” they “mean those exercises of the mind which are of a religious nature^k,” or “a consciousness of the influence of truth on the heart, temper, and conduct^l.” “If a person men-

^f Ephes. iv. 30. ^g Acts vii. 51. ^h Matt. xiii. 15.

ⁱ Williams, p. 299. Scott, vol. ii. p. 210, 211.

^k Williams, p. 301. Overton, p. 110. ^l Williams, p. 303.

“tion either the time, the place, or the
 “occasion of his undergoing any remark-
 “able change, either of his views, his re-
 “solutions, his affections, or conduct,”
 they “call it his experience; if it be scrip-
 “tural and rational,” they “approve it; if
 “otherwise,” they “disapprove it^m.” This
 use of the word is certainlyⁿ not scriptural;
 and although the fruits of the Spirit are
 seen in “all goodness, and righteousness,
 “and truth^o,” the original formation and
 gradual maturity of them are often secret
 and indiscernible; and we are taught, that
 as “the wind bloweth where it listeth, and
 “thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst

^m Williams, p. 302. Overton, p. 110. Scott, vol. i.
 p. 112. 143—148.

ⁿ Scott, vol. i. p. 144. “The word ‘experience’ does
 “not frequently occur in Scripture, but the thing itself
 “meets us every where.” The word *δοκιμη*, translated
 experience, Rom. v. 4. occurs frequently; meaning, in
 that text, the proof which is afforded of God’s goodness
 in support under persecution; more commonly the proof
 which another person affords in his actions, of *liberality*,
 2 Cor. ix. 13. of *obedience*, 2 Cor. ii. 9. of ministerial *faith-*
fulness, Philip. ii. 22. and *authority*, 2 Cor. xiii. 3. In
 no one of these texts does it signify the consciousness
 of the individual. ^o Ephes. v. 9.

“ not tell whence it cometh, and whither it
 “ goeth, so is every one that is born of the
 “ Spirit^p.”

IV. 1. On the doctrine of justification by
 faith without works, the Calvinists “ con-
 “ sider justification as an act of sovereign
 “ grace and mercy, vouchsafed to sinners
 “ on account of what the Lord Jesus
 “ Christ hath done and suffered for them,
 “ and in no respect on account of their
 “ own merits and deserts; and it is solely
 “ through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ
 “ that we do or ever can obtain this mercy
 “ at God’s hands^q.” Let fatherly be sub-
 stituted for sovereign grace, and this is
 sound apostolical doctrine, not peculiar to
 the Calvinists; for “ no man can lay any
 “ other foundation than that which is laid,
 “ even Jesus Christ^r,” “ neither is there
 “ salvation in any other; for there is no
 “ other name under heaven given among
 “ men, whereby we must be saved^s.”

2. In the same sense probably it is as-

^p John iii. 8. ^q Simeon, p. 60. ^r 1 Cor. iii. 11.

^s Acts iv. 12.

served, that “good works have nothing to do with our justification^t,” and “that all works of man are wholly excluded from any share in our justification^u.” So also when Calvinists speak of being justified by faith without works, they “do not mean that a justified person is at liberty to neglect good works, but that the person who seeks for acceptance through Christ must not bring with him any works whatever, either ceremonial or moral, as a joint ground of his hope, or as a price which he is to pay for an interest in Christ^x.” This also in a certain sense we admit to be true, for we have been “justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus^y,” and “God saveth us according to his mercy, and not by works of righteousness which we have done^z.”

3. By the faith which justifies is meant, “a cordial belief of God’s testimony, and a reliance on his promises

^t Vaughan’s Account, p. 64. ^u Scott, vol. i. p. 283.

^x Simeon, p. 59. ^y Rom. iii. 24. ^z Titus iii. 5.

“ a receiving with interest and approbation
 “ the witness of God which he hath testi-
 “ fied of his Son, and a sure trust and
 “ confidence in God for salvation, through
 “ Jesus Christ^a.” “ The way in which it
 “ justifies is not as possessing any merit,
 “ but as the only ordained mean and in-
 “ strument by which we thus receive, ap-
 “ prehend, and apply to ourselves the fruits
 “ and merits of Christ’s death^b.” “ This
 “ faith by which we are justified, though
 “ *our own*, is not of *ourselves* ; it is the gift
 “ of God . . . and it is therefore of the Spi-
 “ rit of Christ that we are primarily united
 “ to him^c,” and “ the condition of our con-
 “ tinuance in justification . . . must . . . be
 “ the possession of that lively faith, which
 “ is the inseparable effect of possessing
 “ the Spirit of Christ^d.” The faith which
 constitutes a justifying union, is “ a living,
 “ not a dead and unproductive faith^e,”

^a Overton, p. 188. Simeon, p. 57. Williams, p. 154.
 Scott, vol. i. p. 257. ^b Overton, p. 188. 199. ^c Wil-
 liams, p. 128, 129. 194. 291. ^d Ibid. p. 132. ^e Ibid.
 p. 128.

a faith which produces, though it doth not comprise, good works^f.

4. The distinction between a primary and final justification is rejected by Calvinists as an absurdity of Socinianism^g. This distinction is nevertheless maintained in the Scriptures, in which our common present justification is always spoken of as perfect and complete, but liable to be forfeited, and generally with reference to some obligation or privilege ensuing^h. It is for want of this distinction, that good works are described as not being “the appointed condition of justificationⁱ,” which is represented as “an abiding state of acceptance with God^k,” as “a state of entire and meritorious acceptance, obtained by

^f Scott, *passim*.

^g Overton, p. 179. 210, 211. The British Review calls it “the unscriptural doctrine of a double justification.” No. xxiii. p. 134.

^h Rom. vi. 4. 22. viii. 3, 4. 2 Cor. v. 17. 21.

ⁱ Overton, p. 273. Scott, vol. i. p. 283. 356. 389. he objects altogether to the use of the word ‘conditions.’ See vol. i. p. 168. 265. 354. 356. 383.

^k Scott, vol. i. p. 285.

“ faith only, without the deeds of the law ;
 “ and when obtained, never lost¹.” Saint Paul, of whose justification there can be no doubt, spake a different language. “ If
 “ by any means I might attain to the re-
 “ surrection of the dead : not as though I
 “ had already attained, either were already
 “ perfect ; but I follow after, if that I may
 “ attain that for which I also am appre-
 “ hended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I
 “ count not myself to have apprehended^m.”
 These expressions will be applied by every man who considers that he is to “ render
 “ an account to God,” and to “ receive
 “ according to his worksⁿ.” On this retri-
 bution the Calvinistic writers do not seem to insist. In the statements of some of them, the principal purpose of the final judgment is not so much to separate the righteous from the wicked, as to “ fix the
 “ degree of our blessedness in eternity^o,” and
 “ the measure of our everlasting reward^p,”
 and to evidence the sincerity of faith^q.

¹ Vaughan's Account, p. 308. ^m Philip. iii. 11—13.

ⁿ Rom. xiv. 12. 2 Cor. v. 10. ^o Overton, p. 293.

^p Simeon, p. 76. ^q Scott.

V. “ All Calvinists hold that the redemption of Christ is sufficient for all, “ but effectual only to the elect^r;” and “ the doctrine of general redemption is “ held by most of the Calvinists in the “ Established Church^s;” and of the Dissenters also a principal writer judged it right “ to maintain, that the sacrifice for “ sin is adequately sufficient for every person in the world, and is mercifully proposed as such to be received on the terms “ of faith and repentance, without any reprobating decree to the contrary^t.”

1. The predestination which this writer imputes to the modern Calvinists is this^u: “ That all mankind are in a state of guilt “ and sinful imbecility; that God foresaw

^r Scott, vol. ii. p. 372. ^s Ibid. vol. ii. p. 165. 197. 331. Mr. Vaughan labours to support the contrary doctrine. It is one of his principal propositions: “ We “ have here the entire ruin of the whole human race “ asserted to have taken place in Adam; the recovery “ of a part only of that ruined race in Christ.” Letter, p. 63.

^t Williams, p. 384. 382. 182. 189. Compare Vaughan’s Account, p. 305, 306. where he is recording the sentiments of Mr. Robinson. ^u Williams, p. 202.

“ this from eternity ; that he therefore pre-
 “ destined an adequate remedy in the
 “ sacrifice of Christ ; that this should be
 “ announced to men as commensurate^x to
 “ the evil.” They “ further maintain, that
 “ there was not in the present state of man
 “ any adequate ground of certainty, that
 “ any one, without preventing gracious in-
 “ fluence, would avail himself of the pro-
 “ posed remedy, and therefore that God
 “ *predestinated*, under the direction of in-
 “ finite wisdom, to influence the hearts of
 “ some, i. e. those who are finally glorified,
 “ to repent, believe, obey, and persevere
 “ in a holy course, as the way^y to everlast-
 “ ing happiness.” . . . They “ hold no pre-
 “ destination which separates^z the end and
 “ the means.” They “ do not presume
 “ to conjecture a priori who are predesti-
 “ nated^a to eternal life ; but they infer

^x Williams, p. 197. ^y Compare Williams, p. 221.
 239. 272. 358. 477. Scott, vol. ii. 73. 78. 146. 153. 158.
 411. ^z Compare Williams, p. 243. 248. 294. 473. 525.

^a “ Calvinists do not hold, that all who think them-
 “ selves, or are thought by others . . . the elect of God
 “ . . . will necessarily be saved ; but only that all whom

“ from the imbecility of man, that if any
 “ one is penitent, faithful, diligent, perse-
 “ vering, and finally glorified, these great
 “ effects are from the special^b and distin-
 “ guishing energy of God, and that what-
 “ ever he does in time he purposed to do
 “ from eternity.”

This predestination it is alleged “ is in-
 “ finitely worthy of the divine character
 “ and perfections^c ;” and in it, they say, “ it
 “ is difficult to find even the semblance of
 “ infringement of either justice or good-
 “ ness^d.” From this Calvinistic election it
 is also considered erroneous to infer “ a
 “ degree of reprobation, preterition, or
 “ non-election^e,” because “ non-election is
 “ a negative idea, not electing,” and not a
 positive idea, which would require “ a po-

“ God, who searches the heart, knows to be true be-
 “ lievers. His decrees are wholly unknown to man,
 “ until manifested by the event.” Scott, vol. ii. p. 55.
 89. 378. 478. 670.

^b Compare Williams, p. 208. 244. Scott, vol. ii. p.
 282, 283. ^c Williams, p. 222. ^d Ibid. p. 203.
 277. 500. 503. ^e Ibid. p. 204. 220. 269, 270. 478.
 Robinson, as reported by Vaughan, Account, p. 306.
 Overton, p. 96. Scott, vol. ii. p. 154—158.

“ sitive determination by way of decree^f.
 “ The truth of the case is, that on suppo-
 “ sition of one million being elected to ho-
 “ liness as the means, and happiness as the
 “ end, the other million is not elected to
 “ holiness and happiness^g.”

To this hypothetical conclusion we cordially assent: if one million is elected, the other million is not elected; and such is the whole Calvinistic scheme, that those who are not elected are exposed to all the consequences which would result from the most formal and positive decree of reprobation.

2. This is admitted by another Calvinistic writer, who presents a very different view of the doctrine of Predestination; and the

^f “ We suppose therefore that the divine decree is
 “ positive in respect of the elect, ‘ to deliver from curse
 “ and damnation,’ ” &c. Art. 17. “ But that the pur-
 “ pose of God is *negative* as to others; that is, he pro-
 “ poses to leave them to themselves, and to do nothing
 “ to deliver them from the punishment which their sins
 “ deserve, or from the consequence of their depraved
 “ hearts and rebellious conduct.” Scott, vol. ii. p. 122,
 123. 247. 314. 410. 455. 605. 620. 653, 654.

^g Williams, p. 206. 209.

substance of whose more detailed and copious statement is, “ that the doctrine of
 “ reprobation is inseparably connected with
 “ that of election . . . as a twin and connate
 “ branch shooting out of the same parent
 “ stock of everlasting decree. If election
 “ ensures the manifestation and infusion of
 “ a grace which is necessary to salvation,
 “ but confined to the foreknown and pre-
 “ destined depositaries of God’s special
 “ favour, those who are not the objects of
 “ this favour, and consequently do not re-
 “ ceive this grace which is necessary to
 “ salvation, must be left in a state of disfa-
 “ vour, rejection, and reprobation^h.” Thus
 is “ God’s sovereignty asserted in the ac-
 “ ceptance of the saved, and in the rejec-
 “ tion of the lost; the saved being brought
 “ to everlasting felicity in Christ, through

^h Vaughan’s Letter, p. 179. 2d edit. “ It does not
 “ appear to me, that either the original word, or our
 “ English word *reprobates*, is ever used in Scripture as
 “ the opposite to *elect*: and as to *reprobation*, it is, I
 “ apprehend, a scriptural *idea*, for they who are not
 “ *chosen* must be *rejected*, but not a scriptural *word* in
 “ any sense.” Scott, vol. ii. p. 82, 83. 623. 673. 718.

“ the electing grace of God; the lost inheriting the portion of everlasting woe, through his most awful, but most just decree of reprobationⁱ.”

ⁱ Vaughan's Letter, p. 63. 128. The system which Mr. Vaughan defends is this: “ The Gospel is that dispensation of the fulness of times, by which God effects his everlasting purpose of delivering, restoring, and bringing to everlasting felicity, in his incarnate Son Christ Jesus, a portion of the human race, which he was intending to create in his own image of goodness,—‘ good,’ ‘ very good;’ and of which the whole, according to his purpose, would fall from that state of uprightness into sin, curse, and damnation, through the power of the devil, acting in and upon the first man, Adam: this favoured portion or remnant being so delivered, restored, and brought to everlasting felicity in Christ, by an exercise of wise and righteous sovereignty on the part of God, whereby he chooses to himself out of this universally condemned race, to the rejection and exclusion of the rest, for reasons secret to us, but of which the furtherance of his own glory is, as in every other appointment, word, and work of God, the ultimate and determinate object. Awful statement! which should never be proclaimed without surest conviction of its truth, and without deepest humiliation towards God, and most affectionate tenderness towards men; but which it is a false compassion to withhold upon demand,—that is, in its proper time and place,—if we be patiently and delibe-

If such a decree were properly authenticated, Christian piety would patiently acquiesce in the decisions of infinite wisdom, or strenuously labour to reconcile them with the benefit of mankind, with the design of the Gospel, with the purposes of the final judgment, and with all the attributes of the "Father of mercies, and God of all consolation." The strong ground of our objection is the want of sufficient evidence, that one million is elected and the other million not elected; that there is a sovereignty exercised in the acceptance of the saved and the rejection of the lost. The proof which we require is a regular series of scriptural texts, which, without being perverted from their meaning, or forcibly detached from their context, shall establish the belief of that gratuitous personal election, which confessedly, or by implication, is the sum and substance of the Calvinistic doctrine.

The following are some of the texts

"rarely persuaded, that it is *of the revelation of God.*"
Letter, p. 61, 62.

which lead us to reject all the peculiarities of Calvinism. It is not the will of God “that any should perish, but that all “should come to repentance^k;” and such was his love, that he “sent not his Son into “the world to condemn the world, but “that the world through him might be “saved^l.” In accomplishment of this love, “Christ came into the world to save sin- “ners^m;” “he died for all” men,ⁿ and “for “every man^o;” he gave his life “a ransom “for all^p,” a “propitiation for our sins, and “not for ours only, but for those of the “whole world^q,” that “as in Adam all “died, so in Christ shall all be made a- “live^r.” Now doth God save us “by the “washing of regeneration, and renewing “of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us “abundantly^s,” which he promiseth to give “to them that ask him^t,” and by which we “have access” through the Son “unto the Father^u.” Thus have we been

^k 2 Pet. iii. 9. ^l John iii. 17. ^m 1 Tim. i. 15.

ⁿ 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. ^o Heb. ii. 9. ^p 1 Tim. ii. 6.

^q 1 John ii. 2. John vi. 51. ^r 1 Cor. xv. 22. ^s Titus

iii. 5, 6. ^t Matt. vii. 11. Luke xi. 13. ^u Ephes. ii. 18.

justified, saved, and delivered from our sins, that we might serve God “without
“fear^x,” and by his Gospel, which is “good
“tidings of great joy to all people^y,” and
by which if any man be willing he is called
to accept the invitation of Christ, doth
God now command “all men every where
“to repent, because he hath appointed a
“day in the which he will judge the world
“in righteousness^z.” On such scriptural ar-
guments, and on the whole unperverted
tenor of the Gospel of Christ, we renounce
all personal election and reprobation; we
maintain a present and a final justification;
we deny that grace is irresistible, indefec-
tible, or conferred by an arbitrary act of
sovereignty; we allow no regeneration dis-
tinct from Baptism; we acknowledge not
that the negative principle of defectibility
operates without intermission upon the will,
or that the natural sinfulness of man is in
all cases, and without any exception, ex-
treme.

^x Rom. iii. 24. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Luke i. 74. ^y Luke
ii. 10. ^z Acts xvii. 30. 31.

It is a popular practice to overlook the entirety^a of the Calvinistic system, and to

^a “ It is allowed that the several doctrines brought
“ under consideration in the Refutation, have in reality
“ a very intimate connection, or concatenation. Origin-
“ al sin, implying the total want in fallen man of what
“ is good before God, makes way for the doctrine of
“ special preventing grace, or regeneration by the Holy
“ Spirit, in order to the true repentance, faith, and re-
“ newed acceptable obedience of any of our fallen race.
“ The remainder of this infection in the regenerate, ren-
“ dering all which they do imperfect or defiled, shews
“ that justification must be of grace in Christ, and by
“ faith alone, not of works, from first to last: and that
“ good works can in this respect do no more than evi-
“ dence faith to be living and justifying; for the alloy
“ of evil connected with them needing forgiveness, they
“ can do nothing either towards justification, or conti-
“ nuing us in a justified state. Regeneration also being
“ a new creation by the omnipotent power of the Holy
“ Spirit, ‘ dividing to every man severally as he will,’
“ must be purposed and intended: and considering the
“ prescience and unchangeableness of God, ‘ the eternal
“ purpose which he has purposed in himself ’ can hardly
“ be excluded: or the conclusion, that those whom he
“ thus regenerates he ‘ will keep by his power through
“ faith unto salvation.’ . . . Numbers however do not al-
“ low or perceive this; and hold the grand outlines of
“ the doctrine, here called Calvinistic, very decidedly
“ and practically, either silently excluding personal

separate such parts as shall be renounced from those which shall be maintained. This general disposition of abating what are “properly denominated the rigours of the Calvinistic system^b,” indirectly proves that its principles are not so “incontrovertible^c” as they have been represented, and the opinions which some of his followers^d have recently expressed concerning the Reformer of Geneva, cannot fail of reducing the estimation in which he has been held. May the acknowledged “fallacy of some inferences drawn from the doctrines of sovereign grace by its friends, and triumphantly echoed by its foes^e,” be universally published and received, and may all due advantage be taken of the important and conciliatory concession, that “on both schemes, the Calvinistic and the Anticalvinistic, they who attain to everlasting felicity are identically the same. On both schemes men must have the

“election and final perseverance from their creed, or directly disavowing them.” Scott, Preface, p. iv. v.

^b Overton, p. 96. ^c Ibid. p. 355. ^d See Williams and Scott. ^e Williams, p. 491.

“ same qualifications for heaven, and all shall be judged according to their works^f.”

Now may the Holy Spirit of God enable us in all things to behave with the caution and humility of men far fallen from original righteousness! Since God hath “ saved us by the washing of regeneration,” may he sanctify us more and more by the gracious renewals of the Holy Spirit; and as we have been justified and “ saved by his grace through faith,” and received such favour as to be called “ the sons of God,” may he preserve us in the holy obedience of those who are heirs through hope of eternal life, which is his gift through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whom God hath “ reconciled the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;” and who is “ the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for those of the whole world*.”

^f Williams, p. 272. Scott, vol. ii. p. 21. 699.

* The length of the preceding discourse renders it necessary to transfer to a note some observations, which it was intended to introduce into the text, on the practical preaching of the Calvinists.

That “there has been a deficiency in evangelical preachers in respect of practical preaching, which many of *them* have deeply lamented, and endeavoured perhaps with some success to remedy^a,” is a position which will not be denied. It would nevertheless be in the highest degree illiberal and unjust to impute to the modern Calvinists, as a body, the deliberate maintenance of Antinomian doctrines, which they formally disavow, and which some of them, among whom Mr. Scott and the late Mr. Robinson may be mentioned without invidious distinction, have strenuously laboured to discountenance and restrain. The principal motives on which they peculiarly enforce the practice of good works will appear in the following citations.

They insist, “that if we are not to demand vigorous exertion, both on the part of those who have the grace of God, and of those who have it not yet, great violence must be done to the sacred volume; much of it must be contradicted or evaded, or, in effect, expunged^b.” They do not therefore “magnify the importance of faith at the expence of practice^c,” but they consider that “the doctrines in question are pregnant with duties both to God and man; these duties are to be explained and enforced, but to constitute them Christian morality they must be enforced from Christian motives^d.” All sensible Calvinists inculcate “the absolute necessity of faith and holiness^e,” and “urge the importance of good works . . . as indispensable towards forming the Christian character,” and

^a Scott, vol. i. p. 355. 389. vol. ii. p. 429. 452. 565. ^b Vaughan's Account, p. 191. ^c Williams, p. 149. Overton, p. 108. ^d Overton, p. 108. ^e *Ibid.* p. 189. Scott, vol. i. p. 281.

to “ justify the goodness of faith . . . by way of evidence
 “ to ourselves and others^f ;” “ they consider holy dis-
 “ positions and good works as the natural fruit and ne-
 “ cessary effect of that faith which justifies ; as the only
 “ satisfactory evidence of a justified state ; as command-
 “ ed of God, and pleasing and acceptable to him in
 “ Christ ; as what we are bound unto by the most press-
 “ ing obligations of gratitude ; as absolutely requisite
 “ in order to our meetness for God’s service in heaven,
 “ and as what will fix the degree of our blessedness in
 “ eternity^g .” “ It is the settled judgment of nearly all,
 “ if not quite all the evangelical Clergy, that such a
 “ faith as is without good works is wholly insufficient
 “ for salvation, and that no faith justifies which does
 “ not evidence itself living and genuine by good works
 “ . . . Our views of justification by faith alone do not lead
 “ us to suppose that an unproductive, inefficient, dead
 “ faith, will justify any man, or that any one will event-
 “ ually be saved who does not perform good works,
 “ according to the time and opportunities allotted him
 “ after having believed in Christ, but merely, that these
 “ good works do not combine with faith in his justifica-
 “ tion^h .” “ They are in the habit of proclaiming to
 “ their hearers, that ‘ whatsoever a man soweth that
 “ shall he also reap,’ . . . and they are not behind any
 “ other denomination of Christians in reproving sinners
 “ of every class, and inculcating personal and relative du-
 “ tiesⁱ .” They teach, that there is “ no certainty of being
 “ chosen to eternal life, or enjoying future happiness, but
 “ by persevering in the ways of holy^k” and “ unreserved

^f Williams, p. 110. Simeon, p. 69. ^g Overton, p. 293. ^h Scott, vol. i. p. 274. ⁱ Williams, p. 150. ^k Ibid. p. 166.

“obedience to God’s revealed will¹.” “In regard to the
 “rule of morals,” they “prescribe a perfect standard,
 “even the whole moral law of God. Perfect conformity
 “in heart and conduct to this law” they “maintain is
 “the duty of all men, and that after this conformity
 “they ought continually to labour^m,” and their “uni-
 “form doctrine is, that nothing except an habitual re-
 “nunciation of evil, and pursuit of that which is good,
 “is a satisfactory evidence of a state of salvation; nay,
 “that all pretensions to such a state without this evi-
 “dence is the highest presumption and the grossest
 “absurdity; and, in short, that it is the Christian’s
 “bounden duty, his highest interest, and his firmest
 “security, and will constitute his daily pleasure, to love,
 “cherish, cultivate, and pursue every species and every
 “possible degree of holiness, for all the reasons, and in
 “consideration of all the motives, which have been
 “enumeratedⁿ.”

These statements of the modern Calvinists on the motives and importance of good works, have been extracted, as an act of justice to those who maintain them, and in the hope of repressing the confidence with which *their* maintenance of them is denied by the misinformed and incautious adversaries, or suppressed by the less sober and judicious advocates of the Calvinistic doctrine. Yet notwithstanding these extracts, many will contend for the *Antinomian tendency* of the doctrines in question; and it is to be deeply regretted, that their suspicions should be confirmed by expressions which occur in the

¹ Williams, p. 239. Scott, vol. ii. p. 63. 71. ^m Overton, p. 271. Compare pages 225. 228. ⁿ Ibid. p. 295.

writings of avowed and distinguished Calvinists. The following sentences are liable to this exception, and can hardly fail of being misapplied into a motive of indolence and despondence, or of presumption and vain security.

“ We think every true Christian, every one who has
 “ the inward grace of baptism, is saved. His salvation
 “ is secured by the promise and covenant of God, and
 “ will certainly be accomplished, though he have to pass
 “ through many trials and temptations, perils and alarms
 “ in the mean while^o.” “ Many a poor sinner is so
 “ convinced that he must be changed or perish everlast-
 “ ingly, that if a wish, or a desire, or a few even vigor-
 “ ous efforts would suffice, he would go so far in seeking
 “ to escape destruction; but has he the disposition to
 “ aspire, even by his wishes and desires, to what in the
 “ sight of God is good^p?” “ Whether is easier to say,
 “ the believer in Christ Jesus is no longer liable to the
 “ penalty of everlasting death, for his deviations from
 “ the pure will of God, but bears all his rod and stripes
 “ in the present life, or to say, though in many things he
 “ offend, and thereby incur the penalty of everlasting
 “ death, that penalty, through repentance and sprink-
 “ ling of the blood of Jesus, is again, and again, and
 “ again remitted^q?” It is concluded from the favour
 shewn to Zaccheus and Manasseh, “ that the Lord de-
 “ lighteth to shew mercy where we should abandon all
 “ expectation; that where sin abounded, there did grace
 “ much more abound^r.” So again it is affirmed, that
 the “ mercy of God is not forfeited by the ingratitude

^o Scott, vol. i. p. 76. ^p Ibid. vol. ii. p. 603. ^q Vaughan's Account, p. 192. ^r Ibid. p. 363.

“ of his children :” and this is called “ a wary form of
 “ declaring, that even the sins and failings of his rege-
 “ nerated, believing servants, do not provoke him to
 “ cast them off. Whilst it is a fact to be stated with
 “ awe, with caution, and with delicacy, is it a fact to be
 “ wholly suppressed? Does it not fitly find its place of
 “ mention in the consideration of that attribute, whose
 “ peculiar province it is to shew favour to the unde-
 “ serving^s?” “ The doctrines of election and perseve-
 “ rance, as Mr. Robinson would have maintained, do
 “ not rest on single and solitary texts for their proof;
 “ they are interwoven with the whole thread, and breath-
 “ ed forth in the general texture of Scripture . . . Would
 “ he have contended, that a righteous man dying in
 “ unrighteousness shall be saved? Would he not have
 “ maintained, that the privileges of the covenant pre-
 “ clude the possibility of such a supposition with re-
 “ spect to the saints of God? No man plucketh them
 “ out of my hand^t.” It is recorded of Mr. Robinson
 by his biographer, that “ by an attendance upon felons
 “ and some other persons of notoriously bad character,
 “ he seemed to witness a peculiar manifestation of the
 “ invincibility and freedom of divine grace.” This po-
 sition is illustrated by appropriate anecdotes, of the
 premature death of a young man who had exhibited
 signs of unbelief, and of especial aversion from the
 ministry of Mr. Robinson; and of a criminal who on
 his first commitment to prison had betrayed the most
 inveterate hardness of heart, until “ brought to a better
 “ mind through the sovereign and effectual grace of

• Vaughan's Account, p. 371.

† *ibid.* p. 372.

“ God, which can make the nether milstone feel, he and
 “ his partner in crime and suffering died composedly
 “ with lively hope and joy^u.” Mr. Overton quotes
 without disapprobation the sentiment of Dr. Hawker,
 that the grace of God is not “ exerted in supporting
 “ what is already strong, nor in helping what possesses
 “ some power; not in cleansing what is in part holy,
 “ but in taking such as are of the mass of helpless, in-
 “ firm, and polluted creatures of the dust, and purifying
 “ them for his glory^x.”

It is not necessary to enlarge upon the tendency of
 these expressions, or upon the form which they assume
 when they are interpreted by the enthusiast, and received
 by the credulous ears of the husbandman and the me-
 chanic. They afford the strongest proof of what the
 Calvinists themselves admit, that there are some of what
 they call “ the characteristic truths of the Gospel, which
 “ are likely to be misapprehended and misrepresented
 “ in a mixed congregation^y,” that “ caution^z” and
 “ reserve^a” are requisite in delivering them, and that
 they should be “ stated accurately, and cleared from
 “ misrepresentation and misapprehension^b.” If under
 these acknowledgments we cannot admit that the zeal
 with which Calvinists urge the “ necessity of a personal
 “ and practical acquaintance” with the doctrines of
 Christ, and the “ consequent distinction between real
 “ and merely nominal Christians, constitute the most
 “ striking of their peculiarities^c,” we will neverthe-

^u Vaughan's Account, p. 168—174. ^x Overton, p. 134. ^y Vaughan's
 Account, p. 64. ^z Scott, vol. ii. p. 477. ^a Ibid. p. 690, 770. vol. i. p. 5.
^b Ibid. vol. ii. p. 362. ^c Overton, p. 107.

less not question the efficacy of their preaching, nor examine the degree of the morality which it produces, and of which the claims are urged with no common confidence^d. We may, however, without adverting to the circumstances of a recent secession, be permitted to repeat the remark, which has been made in the preceding Discourse, that the terms in which the Calvinists refer to the judgment to come are not sufficiently definite and distinct; and it requires but little experience in the parochial ministry to know, that the impressions of this doctrine, which formed the principal article in the belief and religious conversation of our ancient villagers, are gradually losing their influence upon the minds of their posterity. Has then the hope of grace superseded the fear of judgment? And if there has been a time, in which the former was overlooked, may there not also be a time, in which the latter shall be almost, if not altogether suppressed? These are questions which, in the present state of religion and morals, are worthy of the deepest and most candid consideration.

The private characters of the Calvinistic Clergy are unexceptionable; their adherence to the formularies, and to what they conceive to be the doctrines of the Church of England, is rigorous and exact; the zeal of their ministry is indefatigable; their concert and co-operation with each other are worthy of all praise and emulation. There is a something in their personal conduct so fascinating and imposing, as to increase the necessity of warning the inexperience and indiscriminating credulity of our younger brethren, of the obliquity of the

^d Williams, p. 150. Scott, vol. i. p. 351. vol. ii. p. 448.

Calvinistic doctrine. Let it not be thought an officious intrusion to exhort them to make the true meaning of the Scriptures the first and last object of their pursuit, and to employ all the leisure which they possess before their admission into holy orders, and all which they may afterwards be able to reserve from the more active duties of their office, in the severe examination of the Greek Testament, by the grammatical construction of which many a controversy may be determined, and many perverse things may be rectified. Hence let them learn what is true, and they will have no occasion to follow the circuitous path which was recommended by Bishop Horsley, or to labour through the ponderous volumes of Calvin, and his immediate followers, whose authority is exploded, and much time and erudition have been vainly exhausted in refuting it. Let them not call Pelagius or Austin, Calvin or Arminius, their father or master upon earth, to perpetuate their perverted doctrines; but as the disciples of Christ, instructed by the Apostles and Prophets, let them lay in straight furrows the Word of Truth, and keep to sound and wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON IV.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE ROMANISTS COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

1 TIM. iv. 1, 2, 3.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

THE privilege of offering pure and acceptable worship unto God was reserved to distinguish the times of the Messiah. Before the world was instructed by his gracious doctrine, the Gentiles, who knew not God, offered a false and unmeaning service to them, that by nature were no gods: and the Jews, who had received a form of

knowledge in the Law, but had corrupted its holy ordinances by many burthensome ceremonies of human invention, entertained but little consideration of the grace, the spirit, and the truth, which are appropriate to the adoration of the heart. The time was foretold when “incense and a pure offering” should be offered in every place, to the name of God^a; when not in one chosen mountain only, but in every place, from the “rising of the sun to the going down of the same,” “the house of prayer” should unfold its gates for the admission of all people^b; and when no more with the distant homage, which the creature owes to the Creator, but with the confidence and freedom of access, which become the children of adoption, they should draw near to the throne of grace, and “worship the Father in spirit and in truth^c.”

He, who knew the service which God required, and which it was in the power of man to offer, hath taught us to worship the heavenly Father with the secret aspirations

^a Malachi i. 11. ^b Isaiah lvi. 7. ^c John iv. 21—23.

of the heart, and with unwearied importunity, but without the exhibitions of hypocrisy, or the tediousness of vain repetitions^d. It was worthy of his deep and penetrating knowledge of the human heart, and of the natural disposition of men to substitute the easy forms for the elevated practice of devotion, which had been but too powerfully exemplified in the formalities of the Jewish worship, that expressions should occasionally fall from him to warn his disciples of the danger of a false and lifeless religion, and of implicit deference to human authority^e, if not exact prophecies of such an event. To his Apostles the Spirit spoke expressly of an apostasy from the true faith, and of a corruption of their spiritual worship. To the last and most beloved of his disciples, the progress of this corruption was exhibited in mysterious detail: and the event, as far as it has been developed, has justified all of the prophetic revelation which can be interpreted and explained. The ancient prophet Daniel^f

^d Matt. vi. 5, 6, 7. ^e Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. ^f Daniel xi. 36—39.

hath also spoken of the same deviation from the pure standard of the Gospel, and of the introduction of a spiritual despotism; and therefore it cannot be objected as a new and strange thing, of which no caution was delivered, and for which no provision was made, that the Church of Christ hath not been infallible in her professions of faith, nor immaculate in her forms of religious service. The sum of these several admonitory predictions is collected by St. Paul in the text, in which both the cause and the effect are unfolded. The Spirit speaketh expressly and without reserve, that in the latter times and after-ages of the Church, some considerable part shall apostatize from the faith—from the faith delivered to the saints, giving heed to erroneous spirits, and doctrines concerning mediatory demons, through the hypocrisy of liars, having a conscience “seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats^g.”

The cause of this apostasy is an undue attention to erroneous spirits and doctrines

^g 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3.

concerning demons, derived from the subtlety and hypocrisy of liars and inventors of fables, who without remorse forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats. This prophecy will repel every imputation, which the superstitious or the unbelieving can allege against the providence of God in the corruption of his Church, if it can be shewn that the pure faith of the Gospel has been abandoned through a preference to the traditions of men; that the just authority of the Church has been exceeded and abused through the subtlety of liars; and that by these means the worship of the dead, the prohibition of marriage, a distinction of meats, and many legendary and traditional errors in worship and in faith, have been introduced, so contrary to the principles of the Gospel, as to be equivalent to an apostasy from the faith.

1. The difficulty of settling the rule and standard of faith is generally admitted; and the subject is said to be worthy of all the penetration and acuteness of the theologian, since it is the hinge of every contro-

versy concerning the faith^h. The following propositions contain the principal doctrine of the Romanist on the insufficiency of the Scriptures, and the use and value of an uninterrupted tradition. The Scriptures are “of no use as an independent rule of “faithⁱ;” they serve only “with a powerful “aid to support . . . the divine truth of the “faith which we have received^k.” “The “well taught Catholic does not apply them “definitively^l;” to him they are but as a “silent letter,” which can give him “no “security^m,” and which require a judge and an interpreter besides the private judgment of the readerⁿ. “Every article of “faith is founded on the word of God, “written or unwritten; the latter is derived “from immemorial tradition, the former

^h Tractatus de Ecclesia Christi. Autore Lud. Ægid. Delahogue . . . nunc in R. Catholico S. Patritii Collegio Dogmaticæ Theologiæ Professore, p. 492.

ⁱ The Faith of Catholics confirmed by Scripture, and attested by the Fathers of the first five centuries of the Church; inscribed to the Catholics of the United Kingdom, by Joseph Berington and John Kirk, p. xiv.

^k Ibid. p. xv. ^l Ibid. p. xvii. Delahogue, p. 90.

^m Berington, p. xvii. ⁿ Delahogue, p. 90.

“ consists of the Scriptures, and the decrees of General Councils^o.” Thus are the Scriptures a law and rule of faith . . . and they alone can be strictly called the Words of God who speaks, the Oracles of the Holy Spirit, from which, in those things which they contain, it is unlawful to depart^p. Tradition, which means doctrine not written in the canonical Scriptures, but read in the decrees of Councils and the writings of the Fathers^q, is one of the sources from which the Church ought to derive doctrine which may be confirmed definitively by its sovereign judgment^r; “ and a Catholic finds no more difficulty “ in assenting to any truth she proposes to

^o Gandolphy's Defence of the Ancient Faith, vol. i. note in p. 409 to 416. This work, after receiving the strongest testimonies of approbation from the highest authorities at Rome, has been suppressed by the Romish ecclesiastical authority in England. The extracts from it are copied from a pamphlet, entitled, “ The Dangers “ with which Great Britain and Ireland are now menaced “ by the Demands of Irish Roman Catholics, shewn and “ proved from authentic Documents.”

^p Delahogue, p. 104. ^q Ibid. p. 408. ^r Ibid. p. 230.

“ him as an article of faith, than he would
 “ in admitting the oral testimony of God
 “ himself^s ;” and “ should any point of his
 “ belief seem to receive little support, or
 “ even no support from any text of Scrip-
 “ ture . . . its truth is not thereby affected^t .”
 This unwritten tradition has therefore the
 force of the written law^u ; and from its
 connection with the deposit of the faith, a
 supposition of its failure, or of the cor-
 ruption of its integrity, would cast a re-
 flection upon the providence of God^x. The
 “ honour” of our Saviour “ demands that the
 “ general body of those whom he has really
 “ chosen to be the spiritual guides of others
 “ should speak no other language but such as
 “ flows from God himself. Confiding there-
 “ fore in the pledge which Jesus Christ
 “ has given, that his sacred trust will never
 “ be betrayed to the powers of darkness,
 “ every Catholic regards their decision
 “ upon any controverted article of faith
 “ as the voice of God^y .”

^s Gandolphy, vol. i. p. 429. ^t Berington, p. xvi.
 viii. ^u Delahogue, p. 409. 493. ^x Ibid. p. 420.
 425. ^y Gandolphy, vol. i. p. 398, 399.

This confidence would be more reasonably entertained, if there had been any promise of preserving the purity of tradition; if there had been no admonitions to beware of these traditions; if we had not been solemnly instructed, that if even “an angel from heaven should preach any other Gospel” than that which the apostles preached, he should “be accursed^z.” The Scriptures certainly afford no countenance to these traditions. To that part of the sacred Volume, which was not completed by the evangelical writings, our Saviour appealed, not only as to a testimony concerning himself, but as to a record of “eternal life^a :” and it was the advantage of Timothy, that from a child he had known the holy Scriptures, which were able to make him “wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus^b.” The argument is so far from being weakened by the enlargement of these inspired records, that we are assured, that “all Scripture given by divine inspiration,” (and this

^z Galat. i. 8.

^a John v. 39.

^b 2 Tim. iii. 15.

character certainly includes the New Testament not less than the Old,) “ is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,” not only in a subordinate, dependent, or auxiliary manner, but “ that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works^c.” St. Luke wrote his Gospel, that Theophilus might “ know the certainty of those things in which he had been instructed^d ;” and St. Paul judged it “ safe” for the Philippians, that he should commit the subject of his Epistle to writing, and not leave them to the uncertainty of oral tradition^e. So likewise when St. John concluded the sacred history, and acknowledged that there were “ many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written ;” he nevertheless declared that his testimony was true, and that he wrote these things that we “ might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God,

^c 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. ^d Luke i. 4. • Philip. iii. 1.

“ and that believing we might have life
 “ through his name^f.” The book of the
 Apocalypse, which concludes the sacred
 Canon, denounces a heavy judgment upon
 any man who should enlarge or abridge
 what it contained^g.

It is true that the Scriptures have been
 and may be misinterpreted and misapplied ;
 and what is there so perfect in the hands of
 man which is not liable to abuse? It is no
 valid objection, however, which is founded
 on St. Peter’s censure of the misuse of the
 writings of St. Paul : “ As our beloved
 “ brother Paul also, according to the wis-
 “ dom given unto him, hath written unto
 “ you, as also in all his Epistles, speaking
 “ in them of these things, in which are
 “ some things hard to be understood, which
 “ they that are unlearned and unstable
 “ wrest, as they do the other Scriptures,
 “ unto their own destruction^h.” It is a
 natural and obvious conclusion from the
 Apostle’s judgment, that the other Scrip-

^f John xx. 30, 31. xxi. 24, 25. ^g Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

^h 2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

tures, as well as the Epistles of St. Paul, were at this time in the hands of the people, not withholden or suppressed in any secret depository, but so commonly promulgated, that, in their most difficult passages, the unstable and unlearned perverted them from their true sense and interpretation.

2. It is admitted that the tradition is in itself obscure; and from hence is inferred the necessity of an infallible interpreterⁱ, of the speaking “and teaching authority” of the successors of the Apostles,^j which, “resting on the commission given by our Saviour to his Apostles^k,” is the only security. This authority is inferred from the promises made to Peter, and is appropriated to the Church, or to the Bishops and Pastors of the Church, “either dispersed or convened in council^l,” convened under the sanction of the Bishop of Rome^m, or in their distributive state, not remonstrating against the decisions of those

ⁱ Delahogue, p. 506. ^k Berington, p. xvii. xviii. xix.

^l Ibid. p. 145. Delahogue, p. 128. 134. 230.

^m Delahogue, p. 380. 381. 440.

councils. This authority is definitiveⁿ in matters of faith and morals, as is that also of the Pope under the similar acquiescence of the Bishops^o. Their judgments are irrevocable, irrefragable, and infallible^p; so that “the Catholic Church is the guide to truth, the expounder of the Scriptures, and the judge of controversy^q.” Thus “the Church speaks definitively by the voice of her councils^r,” and “all Catholics are obliged to adhere implicitly to all decrees and canons, which the Church, assembled in General Councils, declares and delivers, and which the Pope has confirmed^s.” In matters of discipline, whether essential or not essential to the constitution of the Church, its judgment is also infallible^t; and the laws which

ⁿ Delahogue, p. 28. 45. 51. 88. 90. 111. 127. 196. 197. 198. 211. ^o Ibid. p. 152. ^p Ibid. p. 94. 146.

^q Berington, p. 31. 112. ^r Gandolphy, vol. i. ^s Dr. Troy, as quoted in *The Dangers, &c.*

^t Delahogue, p. 198. “*Ecclesia jus habet sanciendo articulos disciplinæ et ubi certo ac firmo decreto eos proponit cum intentione omnes ecclesias obligandi non potest errare eo sensu quod illa disciplina vel cum doctrina fidei non consentiat, vel bonis moribus ad-*

it enacts command the obedience of the faithful^u. In its decisions concerning facts connected with doctrine^x, and in its censures of the works which contain that doctrine^y, it is also infallible, and the same assent is required. “In matters of fact
“or discipline, things alterable by circum-
“stances of time or place, or in matters of
“speculation or civil policy,” things not under its jurisdiction^z, but “depending on
“mere human judgment or testimony^a,” it is conceded that the Church may err.

It might be sufficient to remark, that these privileges of inerrancy, which are assumed from the promises made to Peter, cannot be proved from those promises, and that the conclusion is contradicted by notorious acts of errancy and fallibility, of which Protestants need not to be reminded, and of which Romanists will not be convinced. What more immediately concerns the proposed method of our inquiry is,

“versetur vel in iis in quibus præscribitur circumstantiis
“religioni Christianæ sit nociva.”

^u Berington, p. 406. ^x Delahogue, p. 237. ^y Ibid. p. 219. ^z Ibid. p. 268. ^a Berington, p. 155.

that the Scriptures, so far from delivering the most distant intimation of the permanent purity of the Church, speak explicitly and distinctly of the corruption of the Christian faith^b, and of the degeneracy of Christian manners^c, the preservation of which would have been the appropriate office of an infallible Church. If it be allowed to draw the veil from accomplished and unaccomplished prophecy, and to unfold the sublime mysteries of the Apocalypse, there are predictions, copious, distinct, and marked by the precision of chronological detail, of the rise and fall of the great apostasy of Mohammed, and of the progress, maturity, and declension of a corrupt and persecuting Church.

3. The Church to which infallibility is assumed, “is that which is termed the Roman Catholic Church^d;” a Church always the same, divided from none more ancient than itself, and binding all its members in identity of profession and

^b 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. 2 Thess. ii. 3—12. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

1 John ii. 18. 22. Rev. passim.

^c 2 Tim. iii. 1—7.

^d Berington, p. 90.

unity of communion^e. This Church alone possesses universality simultaneous and permanent^f; no other Christian society possesses apostolic origin, and ministry, and succession^g. She is the primary unity, the original root and trunk from which has flowed to other Churches that apostolic vigour which gave them life in Christ^h. She alone is the bride, which Christ hath purchased with his blood; the Church, which he ordained for an endless perpetuity, and suffered not the gates of hell to prevail against itⁱ. With the same lofty pretensions it is maintained, that the Church of Rome is the only survivor of the Churches which were directly and immediately founded by the Apostles^k; that she is “the mother and mistress of all Churches^l;” “that... illegality and nullity characterized the first Protestant consecrations^m;” that Protestants are

^e Delahogue, p. 44. ^f Ibid. p. 58. 61. 65. ^g Ibid. p. 74, 75. ^h Ibid. p. 75. 82. ⁱ Ibid. p. 82. ^k Ibid. p. 424.

^l Creed of Pius IV. which “is subscribed by Catholics on several occasions.”

^m Gandolphy, vol. iv. note in p. 102. “And yet this is

therefore, by the very fault of their origin, schismaticalⁿ; that they cannot clear them-

“ the legitimate stock from whence all their subsequent
 “ ordinations have emanated: now what says Jesus
 “ Christ? ‘ He that entereth not by the door into the
 “ sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is
 “ a thief and a robber;’ and all who adhere to such, par-
 “ ticipate in the same grievous crime.” Ibid. “ The ar-
 “ guments of Catholics against the validity of Protestant
 “ ordinations may be resolved into these two grand
 “ objections. 1. A defect of succession from the Catho-
 “ lic hierarchy. 2. A defect in the sacramental form of
 “ ordaining.”—“ At present a Protestant Bishop or
 “ Clergyman, on his conversion to the Catholic faith,
 “ returns to the rank of a layman, and should he solicit
 “ and prove worthy to become a minister of that reli-
 “ gion, he receives his consecration from a Bishop of the
 “ Catholic Church, which would be a sacrilegious act of
 “ the Catholic party, were he really previously ordain-
 “ ed.”—“ Valid orders, like valid baptism, can never be
 “ reiterated.” Ibid. p. 68—71.

ⁿ Delahogue, p. 461. “ The term Reformation, in the
 “ understanding of a Catholic, means, first, a departure
 “ from the ancient faith or revealed religion of Jesus
 “ Christ: 2dly, the substitution of one of human inven-
 “ tion, by Luther and his followers, more agreeable to
 “ the passions, and better adapted to the inclinations of
 “ the heart: thirdly, the unjustifiable rebellion against
 “ the lawful authority of Christ’s Catholic Church.”
 Gandolphy, vol. ii. p. 129. “ It is neither apostasy, nor

selves of the charge^o which puts them out of the way of salvation^p; that they have neither the sanctity^q, the catholicity^r, nor the apostolicity^s of the true Church; that their orders, however valid, are not legitimate^t; and that the Churches of the East are also schismatical, and all separated at a definite period from the Romish communion^u.

Under these imputations the Protestant and scriptural theologian may take up his parable, and say: What! “went the word “of God out from you, or came it unto “you alone?” Without digressing into the question of an apostolical succession at the time of the Reformation, the unanswerable defence of which obtained for a Romanist the honours of this University; it may be asked, Where was the Church of Rome

“schism, nor rebellion, to separate from them: even “the Church of England, which is the eldest of her “heretical sisterhood, is a schismatical branch, a dead “limb of the true vine, a rebellious child.” Ibid.

^o Delahogue, p. 41. 460. ^p Ibid. p. 35. 12. 16. ^q Ibid. p. 55. ^r Ibid. p. 65. 66. ^s Ibid. p. 74. ^t Ibid. p. 71. ^u Ibid. p. 75. 76. Gandolphy, vol. ii. p. 200.

when Barnabas, with the assistance of Paul, was organizing the Church of Antioch^x? when these partners in the conversion of the Gentiles were at Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, “ordaining elders in every “Church^y?” when Paul was for two whole years employed in constituting the Church of Ephesus^z? when Peter and John were laying their hands on the Samaritans^a, or when James was presiding over the Church of Jerusalem^b? The Church of Rome, although it had received an apostolical letter, in which reference is made to a form of Church-government, in nothing different from that which was common to the Corinthians and the Ephesians^c, was nevertheless in such a state of obscurity, and infantine imbecility, that the Jewish inhabitants of the city knew nothing of the Apostle of the Gentiles, and had heard no more of the sect of the Nazarenes, than that it was every where spoken against^d.

^x Acts xi. 26. ^y Acts xiv. 21, 23. ^z Acts xix. 10. xx. 31. ^a Acts viii. 14, 15, 17. ^b Acts xv. 13. ^c Compare Romans xii. 6—8. 1 Cor. xii. 28—30. Ephes. iv. 11, 12. ^d Acts xxviii. 21, 22.

4. The Roman Pontiff, as successor of Peter in his episcopal see, justly claims to himself, *by a divine right*, the primacy of honour and jurisdiction in the Universal Church which was granted to Peter^e. It is admitted, that “no authority has yet
 “determined, and it seems indeed very
 “difficult to fix the precise rights and pre-
 “rogatives which are conferred by this
 “primacy, and are so inseparably annexed
 “to it, that to oppose their exercise, or
 “deny their existence, would be either
 “schism or heresy^f.” The titles which are used to designate this primacy are, “Lord
 “Primate of the Episcopal Order^g;” “the
 “first Bishop of the Christian Church^h;
 “Chief Pastor of the Catholic Churchⁱ;
 “Metropolitan and Primate of Italy, of
 “Sicily, and of Macedonia, &c. and Pa-
 “triarch of the West^k;
 “the true Vi-
 “car of Christ^l;
 “Head of the whole

^e Delahogue, p. 349. ^f Eustace's Classical Tour through Italy, vol. iv. p. 376. ^g Gandolphy, vol. i. p. 399. ^h Eustace, vol. ii. p. 172. Delahogue, p. 382. ⁱ Eustace, vol. iv. p. 373. ^k Ibid. vol. iv. p. 375. ^l Delahogue, p. 382. Eustace, vol. iv. p. 376.

“ Church, and Father and Teacher of all
 “ Christians^m;” “ a *divinely* appointed
 “ Superiorⁿ;” “ Successor of Saint Pe-
 “ ter^o;” “ the common Father of Chris-
 “ tians^p,” and “ of Christendom, and the
 “ example and the oracle of the Catholic
 “ hierarchy . . . styled Holiness, the Holy
 “ Father, and sometimes, in history, the
 “ Sovereign Pontiff^q.” He is head of the
 Church by divine right, and the centre of
 communion, both for doctrine and for
 binding together the several members of
 the Church with each other^r; ministerial
 and visible Head of the Church^s; the foun-
 dation of the true Church, and the centre
 of mutual charity^t.

Such titles are “ elevated enough to sa-
 “ tisfy the wishes of the most ambitious
 “ Prelate^u,” nor are they unworthy of the
 actual power and authority which they
 convey. “ The divine and unlimited juris-

^m Eustace, vol. iv. p. 376. ⁿ Ibid. vol. iv. p. 377.

^o Ibid. vol. iv. p. 378. Delahogue, passim. ^p Eustace,
 vol. ii. p. 43. ^q Ibid. vol. iv. p. 383. ^r Delahogue, p.

152. 46. 372. 158. ^s Ibid. p. 329. Berington, p. 155.

^t Delahogue, p. 372. ^u Eustace, vol. iv. p. 373.

“ diction with which Saint Peter was in-
“ vested, necessarily descended to his suc-
“ cessors, and still exists in the present
“ Bishop of Rome^x.” The Pope is au-
thorized to issue decrees addressed to the
Universal Church, which, after due publi-
cation, and without remonstrance on the
part of the Bishops, are to be esteemed an
irreversible judgment of the Church^y: and
as he possesses the preeminence in ques-
tions of faith, it is his office to propose
them to the Church^z. To his primacy it
belongs, by ordinary right, to convene ge-
neral councils, to preside in them in per-
son, or by his Legates, and to confirm
them^a, and give them authority. The ap-
peal of other Bishops lies before the Pope,
and he is superior in jurisdiction to all
ecclesiastical powers, except that of a ge-
neral council^b. On proper occasions he
has power of dispensing even with their
rules^c, and without his concurrence their

^x Gandolphy, vol. i. p. 406. ^y Delahogue, p. 152.
157. 158. ^z Ibid. p. 152. ^a Ibid. p. 380. ^b Ibid. p.
382. 385. 394. ^c Ibid. p. 378.

decisions are void, their acts are irregular, and they are not œcumenical^d. He has power of checking by his decrees the progress of error^e, and of issuing rules of discipline which, as far as they are practicable, are imperative on the Catholic Church^f, although they “oblige none, under pain of heresy, to an interior assent^g.” He also “pronounces absolutely on the schismatical and heretical characters of persons, books, and writings, and places obstinate members out of the communion of the Church^h :” and it is his office “to exercise the just prerogatives of his indulging authority, by dispensing with penitential observances, when a good cause requires such indulgenceⁱ.” In “the temporal concerns of states, or the jurisdiction of princes^k,” his authority is now denied; and his infallibility, except when he speaks in the capacity of head of the Church^l, or in concurrence with “a general council, or accept-

^d Delahogue, p. 440. 380. 381. ^e Ibid. p. 377. ^f Ibid. ^g Berington, p. 177. ^h Gandolphy, vol. i. note in p. 409 to 416. inclusive. ⁱ Gandolphy. ^k Berington, p. 178. ^l Delahogue, p. 315.

“ance of the Church^m,” seems to be restricted to the canonization of saintsⁿ.

The extravagance of these titles, and of the offices annexed to them, are sufficient to palliate, if not to justify, the application to the Pope, of the prophecy in which the man of sin is represented as exalting “himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God^o.” How forcibly does this usurped authority remind us of our Saviour’s caution to call no man a master or father upon the earth^p! How contrary is it to the ministrations of mutual love, which he required in his ministers, and of which his own conduct exhibited the most affecting example! and how closely does it approximate to the domineering despotism of the Gentile princes^q! Where, in these splendours of ecclesiastical sovereignty, shall we seek for the aptitude to teach^r, for the sea-

^m Berington, p. 178. ⁿ Delahogue, p. 208.

^o 2 Thess. ii. 4. ^p Matt. xxiii. 8, 9. ^q Matt. xx. 25—28. ^r 1 Tim. iii. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 24.

sonable flexibility to human infirmity^s, for the meekness of reproof, founded on the consciousness of frailty^t, for the gentleness and patience in “instructing those that “oppose themselves^u,” which the Apostles practised and prescribed? In the absence of these evangelical virtues, we see the “lords over the heritage,” not the “examples of the flock^x.”

5. It is acknowledged, that the “inferior degrees of order . . . by which, as it were “by steps, the candidate rises to the priest-hood^y,” have been superadded to those which were divinely instituted; and the concession renders it unnecessary to insist upon the point. It is also conceded by a Romanist, concerning the celibacy of the Clergy; “The discipline of our Church, on “this point, has not always been, it is plain, “what it is at present; but because it is “discipline, therefore may it be changed, “as in the alteration of times and circumstances it has seemed, or shall seem good

^s 1 Cor. ix. 19—23. ^t Galat. vi. 1. ^u 2 Tim. ii. 25.

^x 1 Peter v. 3. ^y Berington, p. 377. 382. The author refers to the Council of Trent.

“ to our ecclesiastical rulers.” He proceeds to assert, that “ the advice of Saint Paul, founded on the justest views, if it did not always enforce the practice, seemed to establish¹ the principle of the expediency of clerical celibacy²,” in virtue of which it is maintained by another writer, that the Romish priest “ is by chastity an angel, and his virginity is the image of the unchangeable unity of God^a.” In behalf of the religious or monastic life, it is further alleged, that “ on the advice given by Christ and by the Apostle is founded the opinion which Catholics entertain of the expediency of what are called the Evangelical counsels, that is, of voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and entire obedience^b.”

^z Berington, p. 382, 383.
p. 108.

^a Gandolphy, vol. iv.

^b Berington, p. 385. “ To live up to these rules constitutes the character of the monastic profession; the vows or solemn promises, which are freely made, induce the obligation, and from this arises the perfection of the state.” . . . “ It was not, however, before the fourth century, that the eremitical life took a regular

It is hardly necessary to observe, that in the passages to which reference is

“ form in Egypt, and other parts of the East : in the
 “ West, S. Benedict, towards the close of the fifth, gave
 “ that rule to his followers, which is most admired, and
 “ which has been very generally adopted by the various
 “ founders of religious orders, male and female, in the
 “ Western Church.” Berington, p. 385, 386.

The times and places were worthy of the institution ; and if inquiry be made into the perfection of the state attained by “ Nuns and nun-like Friars,” as Eustace indignantly describes them, it will be found to consist in “ acting a pious farce of the most absurd and ridiculous kind, because without any good end or object imaginable.” . . . “ The mendicant orders are every where remarkable for absurd practices, childish forms of devotion, and pious trumpery of every kind. . . . We had passed a week in monasteries, and acquired, if not an intimate, at least something more than a superficial acquaintance with the practices of monastic life. We observed in them some things to censure, and some to praise: among the former we may number the useless austerities and overstrained self-denial of the Camaldolese hermits, and, which we considered as still more offensive, the mummery and grimace of the Franciscans of Lavernia. We cannot but consider it as a peculiar advantage, that our laws authorize no establishments which can encourage the delusions of exaggerated devotion, or propagate absurd practices and legendary tales, to the discredit and debasement of true

made^c, Saint Paul declares, that he speaks
 “ by permission, and not of commandment;”
 or that in the arguments both of our Sa-
 viour and of his Apostle, it is the expedi-
 ence, not of clerical, but of general ce-
 libacy, which is asserted; of which the uni-
 versal practice would supersede the divine
 institution of marriage, and render the earth

“ sound religion. Again, the institution of mendicant
 “ orders we cannot but reprobate, as we do not see why
 “ those who can work, should beg; nor can we discover
 “ either utility or decency in sending out at certain
 “ stated periods a few holy vagrants upon a marauding
 “ expedition, to prowl about the country, and forage for
 “ the convent. We consider a poverty so practised, that
 “ is, at the expence of the poor, as in fact oppression of
 “ the poor, and as such we wish to see it proscribed as
 “ a vice, and not recommended as a virtue. . . . Pro-
 “ testants, without doubt, may wish to see many reforms
 “ introduced into monasteries, but it would ill become
 “ them to pass a general sentence of anathema upon all
 “ such institutions, because they may have been shocked
 “ at the useless severities of one order, or disgusted with
 “ the childish processions of another . . . the candid Ca-
 “ tholic will have no difficulty in acknowledging, that
 “ there is much to be reformed, and the candid Protestant
 “ will as readily admit, that there is much to be admired
 “ in monastic institutions.” Eustace, vol. iii. p. 395—
 398. ^c Matt. xix. 10, 11. 1 Cor. vii. 7. 8. 38. 40.

an uninhabited wilderness. These specific and occasional arguments are powerfully confuted by the general directions: “ Let every man have his own wife^d ;” let marriage be “ honourable among all men^e ;” let the bishop be “ the husband of one wife^f ;” directions with which St. Peter himself complied, in virtue of the right which he possessed in common with the rest of the Apostles^g, from whom they that apostatized forbade to marry^h.

The enjoined celibacy of the Clergy is the more extraordinary, because, although it is “ granted that there is not any passage “ in Scripture, in which any express mention “ is made of the institution of this Sacramentⁱ,” Romanists nevertheless “ believe “ matrimony to be a Sacrament of the “ new law, instituted by Christ, whereby a “ new dignity is added to the civil contract “ of marriage, and grace given to those “ who worthily receive it^k.” It is plain,

^d 1 Cor. vii. 2. ^e Hebrews xiii. 4. ^f 1 Tim. iii. 2.
 Titus i. 6. ^g 1 Cor. ix. 5. ^h 1 Tim. iv. 3. ⁱ Berington,
 p. 387. ^k Ibid. p. 386.

however, that the “great mystery¹,” of which St. Paul speaks, and from which the sacramental notion of marriage is derived, relates to the union of Christ with his Church, and not of the man with the woman.

6. “Catholics believe that there are seven Sacraments, or sacred ceremonies, instituted by our Saviour Jesus Christ, whereby the merits of his passion are applied to the soul of the worthy receiver. These Sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony^m.”

Five of these Sacraments are rejected by Protestants, on the common ground that there is no scriptural record of their institution or celebration, as Sacraments. On Order and Confirmation, except as to their sacramental quality, and the authority of Protestant Bishops to administer them, there is little dispute between the Churches of England and of Rome.

¹ Ephes. v. 32. See Berington, p. 387. ^m Berington, p. 181.

7. “ It is an article of Catholic belief,
“ that in the most holy Sacrament of the
“ Eucharist, there is truly and really con-
“ tained the body of Christ, which was de-
“ livered for us, and his blood which was
“ shed for the remission of sins; the sub-
“ stance of the bread and wine being by the
“ power of God changed into the substance
“ of his blessed body and blood, the species
“ or appearances of bread and wine by the
“ will of the same God remaining as they
“ were. This change has been properly
“ called Transubstantiation ⁿ.” “ Christ is
“ not present in this Sacrament according

ⁿ Berington, p. 193. Gandolphy, vol. iii. p. 135, 136. in elevating the office of the priesthood, observes :
“ When in the sacrifice of the mass we celebrate the
“ mystery of the last supper of Jesus Christ, the con-
“ secrated priest of Christ acts not in the capacity of a
“ mere human agent,” but “ exercises the divine pow-
“ ers lodged in him, of working this mysterious change
“ in the substances of bread and wine, and of producing
“ under their species that very body of Jesus Christ
“ which the angels adore. At the moment he fulfils the
“ word spoken by our blessed Saviour, the omnipotence
“ of God operates by his minister, and there is instantane-
“ ously and substantially present in the whole and in
“ every particle of the sacramental elements, that glori-

“ to his natural way of existence, that is,
 “ as bodies naturally exist, but in a man-
 “ ner proper to the character of his exalted
 “ and glorified body. His presence then
 “ is real and substantial, but sacramental;
 “ not exposed to the external senses, nor
 “ obnoxious to corporeal contingencies^o.”
 “ The body of Christ in this holy Sacra-
 “ ment is not separated from his blood,
 “ nor his blood from his body, nor is ei-
 “ ther of them disjoined from his soul and
 “ his divinity: but all and the whole living
 “ Christ is entirely contained under each
 “ species; so that whosoever receives un-
 “ der one kind becomes truly partaker of
 “ the whole Sacrament: he is not de-
 “ prived either of the body or of the blood
 “ of Christ^p,” and thus, “ the introduction
 “ of lay communion under one kind is
 “ easily accounted for, and seems not liable
 “ to any serious objection^q.” In this Sa-
 crament, Jesus “ is given not only to us,
 “ fied body of Jesus Christ, which therein subsists as
 “ long as the elements of bread and wine endure.”

^o Berington, p. 243, 244. ^p Ibid. p. 245. ^q Ibid.
 p. 246.

“ but for us, and the Church is thereby
 “ enriched with a true, proper, and pro-
 “ pitiatory sacrifice, usually termed the
 “ Mass; propitiatory, we say, because re-
 “ presenting in a lively manner the passion
 “ and death of our Lord, it is peculiarly
 “ pleasing to our eternal Father, and thus
 “ more effectually applies to us the all-
 “ sufficient merits of the sacrifice of the
 “ Cross^r.”

These propositions contain the present doctrine of the Romanists on the Sacrament of the Supper of the Lord; and they lead us to ask, whether it was in any degree possible at the time that our Lord instituted this Sacrament^s, and said to his disciples, as he gave to them the bread and the cup, “ Take, eat; this is my body
 “ which is given for you;” “ This cup is
 “ the new testament in my blood, for the
 “ remission of sins; drink ye all of it;” was it in any degree possible, that they should not distinguish between his body

^r Berington, p. 250. ^s Matt. xxvi. 26—28. Mark
 xiv. 22, 23. Luke xxii. 19, 20. 1 Cor. xi. 23—25.

and the bread which he offered, between the wine which they drank and his blood which was about to be shed; that they should have understood his words in a literal, and not in a symbolical or sacramental sense? It is absurd to suppose that they ate his body before he was crucified, or that they drank his blood before it was shed. He instituted the Sacrament in both kinds; and it is our wisdom to adhere to his institution, explained by the known practice of the Apostles, who not only themselves did eat and did “*all*” drink^t, but who taught their followers how they were to eat and to drink^u; and did both break the bread and bless the cup of “the communion of the blood of Christ^x.” The propitiation which he offered, he offered “at once” and for ever^y, and it is not necessary, nor is it possible, that the offering should be repeated.

8. Of “the parts of the Sacrament of Penance,” which are “three, contrition,

^t Matt. xxvi. 27. Mark xiv. 23. ^u 1 Cor. xi. 26—29.

^x 1 Cor. x. 16; ^y Heb. ix. 26. 28. x. 10. 12.

“ confession, and satisfaction^z;” the first is necessary, and is described in terms to which no Protestant will object. “ By *con-*
“ *fession* is understood, the declaration
“ which a penitent sinner makes of his sins
“ to a priest; the obligation of which evi-
“ dently follows from the words of Christ
“ when instituting, as” Romanists “ believe,
“ the Sacrament of Penance, he breathed
“ on his disciples, and said, ‘ Receive ye
“ the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall for-
“ give, they are forgiven them; and whose
“ sins you shall retain, they are retained^a.’ ”

Confession is no more than an inference from this text, which may or may not be admitted; and it is incumbent on the Romanists to prove that they have received the Holy Ghost, so as to possess the same miraculous discernment of spirits which the Apostles possessed, before they presume to claim the fulness of the power with which they were invested.

Satisfaction to injured man is an indispensable duty of the penitent; but in the

^z Berington, p. 293.

^a Ibid. p. 299, 300.

following positions there is a complication of errors in immediate contradiction to the humiliating lesson of our Lord: “When ye have done all those things which are commanded, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do^b.” In opposition to this authority, the Romanist maintains; “All the good works of the just have a double value in the sight of God, one of merit, the other of satisfaction; that is, one giving a title to recompense hereafter, the other constituting an equivalent for the temporal punishment of sin^c ;” or, as it is expressed by another writer, “for the temporal pain, which, in the order of the divine justice, remains due after the guilt of sin, and pain eternal, have been remitted^d.” Hence, “as the satisfaction arising out of the good works of the saints far exceeds their temporal debt to the justice of God, it becomes a balance in favour of the Church,” . . . “an inex-

^b Luke xvii. 10. ^c Gandolphy. ^d Berington, p. 333. Compare Eustace, vol. iii. p. 136.

“haustible stock,” . . . “which, through
 “the infinite mercies of Jesus Christ, she
 “is authorized to apply to the exigencies
 “of her other children^e.”

9. Satisfaction, thus explained, is nearly allied to “that dispensation of mercy which
 “in the Catholic Church is called an In-
 “dulgence,” by which “the guilt of sin,
 “and pain eternal due to it, is not remit-
 “ted . . . but such temporal punishment
 “only, as in the order of divine justice
 “may remain due after the guilt has been
 “remitted^f.” The Catholic, “on several
 “occasions,” affirms, “that the power of
 “granting indulgences was left by Christ
 “in the Church, and that the use of them
 “is most wholesome to Christian people^g ;”
 and the Council of Trent, which speaks
 the same doctrine, is recited, that there
 may be no concealment of the anathema
 which is pronounced upon “those who
 “say they are useless, or deny to the
 “Church the power of granting them^h.”

^e Gandolphy, vol. iv. p. 282. 284. ^f Berington, p. 344.

^g Creed of Pius IV. ^h Sess. xxv. de Indulg. quoted
 by Berington, p. 350.

On us be that anathema, while we deny, without scruple or reserve, their expedience, and more especially their authority. In the historyⁱ of them, they are acknowledged to be subsequent to the canonical penances; and if either the one or the other had been of the institution of Christ,

ⁱ “The *indulgences*, which in these primitive times,”
i. e. cent. iv. “were thus granted, referred to the ca-
“ nonical penances then in use, and of which they were
“ a relaxation. Rigidly severe, they attested the opinion
“ entertained by the Church of the enormity of sin, and
“ of the temporal punishment due to it, after the re-
“ mission of its guilt; for which punishment the pe-
“ nances in question were considered, as far as human
“ judgment could calculate, to be a compensation. They
“ may also be said to have been substituted, in part, at
“ least, in lieu of that punishment. But when, in pro-
“ cess of time, these penances ceased to be enforced;
“ and the temporal punishment, in the order of divine
“ justice, resuming, if it may be so said, its natural
“ course, remained to be undergone by sinners; the
“ Church, empowered by the promises of Christ, con-
“ tinued to exercise the same merciful dispensation in
“ the grant of indulgences, not now by releasing cano-
“ nical penances which were no longer in force, but by
“ remitting, agreeably to the good dispositions of the
“ penitent, some portion of that temporal punishment
“ which he would otherwise have to undergo.” Bering-
ton, p. 349, 350.

there are occasions in the New Testament, in which they might have been exhibited in practice. But did the doubting Thomas or the denying Peter^k undergo such penance, or receive the consolation of such an indulgence? Or is any mention made of an indulgence granted to the incestuous Corinthian, after he was excommunicated and restored^l? or to those who were “weak and sickly^m,” in consequence of their disorderly celebration of the Supper of the Lord? The Romanist will in vain endeavour to deduce the right to which he pretends, from any promise of Christ, from any doctrine or history of the Bible, or even from the power of absolution which Christ gave to his Apostlesⁿ, unless he is prepared to compromise or to arrogate their extraordinary inspiration.

10. The doctrine of Indulgences coincides with another article of Catholic belief, “that there is a purgatory, that is to say, a place or state, where souls depart-

^k Matt. xxvi. 75. John xx. 27. ^l 2 Cor. ii. 6. 10.

^m 1 Cor. xi. 30. ⁿ Matt. xvi. 19. xviii. 18. John xx. 22, 23.

“ ing this life with remission of their sins
 “ as to the guilt or eternal pain, but yet
 “ liable to some temporal punishment, of
 “ which we have just spoken, still remain-
 “ ing due; or not perfectly freed from the
 “ blemish of some defects, which we call
 “ venial^o sins, are purged before their ad-
 “ mittance into heaven, where nothing that
 “ is defiled can enter^p.” Certainly not:
 “ for we must all appear before the judg-
 “ ment seat of Christ.” And for what pur-
 pose shall we appear? “ That every one
 “ may receive the things done in his body,
 “ according to that he hath done, whether
 “ it be good or bad^q.” Romanists “ also
 “ believe, that such souls so detained in
 “ purgatory, being the living members of
 “ Christ Jesus, are relieved by the prayers
 “ and suffrages of their fellow members
 “ here on earth^r,” even “ by the suffrages
 “ of the faithful^s.” Such suffrages have
 no authority of canonical Scripture; and
 the text^t which is principally cited in their

^o *Quere venial.* ^p Berington, p. 351. ^q 2 Cor. v. 10.

^r Berington, p. 351, 352. ^s Creed of Pius IV. ^t 2 Macc. xii. 43—45.

behalf, is not only that of an apocryphal writer, but of a writer who places no confidence in his own statement, and whose narrative, in this respect, is probably a misrepresentation of the fact related.

11. From prayers for the dead, we proceed to the doctrine, “that the saints
 “reigning with Christ are to be honoured
 “and invocated, and that they offer prayers
 “to God for us^u;” “that God may be inclined to hear their requests made in our
 “behalf, and for their sakes may grant us
 “many favours—therefore” they “believe
 “that it is good and profitable to invoke
 “their intercession;” and they ask, “Can
 “this manner of mediation be more injurious to Christ our Mediator, than it is
 “for one Christian to beg the prayers of
 “another here on earth^x?” To this question we answer in the affirmative; because the intercession of a man for his brother is a duty frequently enjoined; and whatever other mediating demons^y may be set up,

^u Creed of Pius IV. ^x Berington, p. 430. ^y 1 Tim. iv. 1.

yet to us there is but “one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus^z.” Though therefore prayers are offered to God, by the merits, by the intercession, and by the prayers^a of many a departed saint, we know that the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ^b, and that the angel of God^c, refused the religious worship which was offered to them, and commanded their mistaken votaries to worship God.

12. That “relics are to be had in veneration^d,” “that honour and respect are due to the Bible, to the Cross, to the name of Jesus, to Churches, &c. as things peculiarly appertaining to God^e,” and “to the representations of Christ, of the mysterious facts of their religion, and of the saints of God, beyond what is due to every profane figure^f,” are doctrines concerning which the Romanists themselves ad-

^z 1 Tim. ii. 5. ^a See the Roman Missal for the use of the laity, containing the masses appointed to be said throughout the year. ^b Acts x. 26. xiv. 14, 15.

^c Rev. xix. 10. ^d Creed of Pius IV. Berington, p. 414. ^e Berington, p. 415. ^f Ibid. p. 414.

mit, that they cannot “believe any virtue to
 “reside in them for which they ought to be
 “honoured, but because the honour given
 “to pictures is referred to the prototype, or
 “the thing represented,” and that honour
 may be given to them “without any dero-
 “gation from the majesty of God, or that
 “divine worship which is appropriate to
 “him ^g.”

13. Romanists are not agreed ^h whether
 “the rich dresses of their ministers, and
 “the decorations of their Churches, and
 “the general pomp of service, set off by
 “incense, lights, and music,” do or do
 not exceed the bounds of Christian sim-
 plicity. It is curious also to contrast the
 ingenuity with which the introduction of
 the Latin tongue is vindicated ⁱ, with the
 earnestness with which the use of a verna-
 cular language is recommended ^k, without
 any reference on either side to the argu-
 ment of the Apostle ^l.

^g Berington, p. 414, 415. ^h Compare Eustace, vol. iv.
 p. 265. with vol. ii. p. 165. 178. and with Berington,
 p. 394. ⁱ Berington, p. 403—406. ^k Eustace, vol. ii.
 p. 180. 132. ^l 1 Cor. xiv.

14. It would be illiberal to impute to British Romanists the revival in Spain of the secret courts of the Inquisition, the re-establishment in France of the most offensive of its orders, and certain recent ordinances prescribing an uninterrupted series of masses for the dead. But it proves the unaltered and unalterable spirit of the religion, that not only has no remonstrance been urged against these practices, so unworthy of the nineteenth century, but that even in our country, the Inquisition has been publicly vindicated as an institution “designed for protection, and not for persecution^m.” Let the liberalist, with his accustomed facility, be satisfied, that Catholics do not, “as Catholics, believe that the Pope has any direct or indirect authority over the temporal concerns of states, or the jurisdiction of princesⁿ.” But is it unjust to suspect a temporizing and interested motive of this opinion, especially as the authority of many recorded

^m Gandolphy, vol. iv. note in p. 258.

ⁿ Berington,

p. 178. Delahogue, p. 248.

acts^o, whether of Popes, or of councils under the influence of Popes, is neither authoritatively nor universally disowned, as the power which they sanction has been frequently exercised, without exciting offence or challenging expostulation, and as the expedience of a mediatory power is even now maintained^p, when the right of arbitration and control is denied?

15. It may vary the labour of exposing the errors and infirmities of the Church of Rome, to collect into one point of view the voluntary acknowledgments and suggestions, which one of the most liberal and accomplished and most lamented of her sons has recently published concerning the late and present State of Religion in Italy. In his classical Tour through that country he was justly offended by “little petty observances^q ;” by the inventions “of nuns and nun-like friars . . . the toys and play-things of that harmless race^r ;”

^o Delahogue, p. 262, 263, for the acts of Popes ; p. 268, 269, for the acts of Councils. ^p Eustace, vol. iv. p. 422.

^q Eustace, vol. i. p. 325. ^r Vol. ii. p. 191. note.

by “the useless severity of one order . . .
 “the childish processions of another^a ;”
 by the exhibition of “a pious farce of the
 “most absurd and ridiculous kind^t ;” and
 by acts “of mischievous superstition,” that
 “ought to be suppressed by public au-
 “thority^u.” He could distinguish between
 the pomp and circumstance of worship,
 and a ritual incumbered “with petty ob-
 “servances^x ;” and he acknowledged that
 “there are in the religion of Italy some,
 “and indeed not a few, abuses . . . the
 “multiplicity of ceremonies, and the in-
 “troduction of theatrical exhibitions and
 “theatrical music into the Church, the ge-
 “neral use and exaggeration of certain po-
 “pular and undignified forms of devotion,
 “and, in fine, the unnecessary number of
 “religious establishments^y.” He did not
 approve the occupation of many a conspi-
 cuous niche in the Vatican, “by a saint of
 “dubious origin, or obscure name, whose
 “existence may be questioned by many,

^s Vol. iii. p. 399. ^t Ibid. p. 395. ^u Ibid. p. 309.

^x Vol. iv. p. 265. ^y Ibid. p. 290.

“ and is unknown to most, and whose vir-
 “ tues at the best had but a local and tem-
 “ porary, that is a very confined and very
 “ transient influence,” or “ whose very
 “ names exist only in a legendary tale^z :”
 nor did he view with pleasure “ a large col-
 “ lection of bones of different saints, toge-
 “ ther with numberless other articles of
 “ equal importance^a.” In the history of
 the Popes, he could discern and acknow-
 ledge, not only the natural compliance of
 “ a decrepit uncle” with “ the suggestions
 “ of an interested nephew^b,” or a pardon-
 able “ fondness for their families^c,” but
 acts also of “ prelatical arrogance^d” and
 “ insolent claims of universal dominion^e,”
 which “ reflect disgrace on the insolent
 “ and domineering Pontiffs^f,” and their
 too frequent conduct, “ as parties concern-
 “ ed with a view to national or to family
 “ aggrandizement^g.” He scrupled not to
 “ condemn the folly and perversity of her

^z Vol. ii. p. 148. ^a Vol. iii. p. 396. ^b Vol. ii. p. 21.

^c Vol. iii. p. 234. ^d Ibid. p. 239. ^e Ibid. ^f Vol. ii. p.

43. ^g Vol. iii. p. 231.

“pastors,” who “submitted to while away
 “their unprofitable days in voluntary exile,
 “alternately the instruments and the vic-
 “tims of French intrigue and ambition^h,”
 struggling “with the restless and unbridled
 “passions excited by the guilt or the folly of
 “their absentee predecessorsⁱ.” His piety
 was offended by the posture in which the
 Pope receives the sacred elements^k; by the
 ceremonies of his election; by the col-
 lection of the votes in the paten; and
 the enthronization on the altar, which,
 “as not edifying to any offensive
 “to most, and producing some evil
 “and no good, ought to be suppress-
 “ed^l.” He could call also with a holy
 zeal for a reform of the ceremonial of the
 Church and Court of Rome, by pruning
 “off the excrescences of the barbarous
 “ages,” and restoring “the simple forms
 “of antiquity^m.” He maintained that
 “even in the spiritual concerns of the a-
 “postolic see, the interests of religion may

^h Vol. iii. p. 230. ⁱ Ibid. p. 231. ^k Vol. ii. p. 170.

^l Vol. iv. p. 397—399. ^m Ibid. p. 386. note.

“ doubtless be best consulted by such concessions and changes in discipline, as the reason, or even the prejudices of the age may seem to demandⁿ;” and he especially recommended a restoration of the cup to the laity, and the use of a vernacular tongue.

Such is the religion of the Church of Rome, not as it was professed by illiterate votaries and artful priests in the ages of darkness, superstition, and bigotry; not as it has been exaggerated by the jealousy of enemies; not as it is represented in the heat and irritation of controversy; but as it is defended with all the calmness and deliberation of voluntary apologists; as it is discussed in the learned leisure of an academical professor; as it is cursorily and gratuitously insinuated into the pages of a traveller of taste and erudition, of candour and moderation, of truth and honest zeal.

If his dignified acknowledgments of existing error, if his wise suggestions of prac-

ⁿ Vol. iv. p. 405.

licable reform, should ever be embraced and carried into execution, there would arise a fair prospect of reunion and reconciliation. Possessing the essence of the same apostolical constitution, of the same evangelical faith, which have been swelled at Rome with many traditional superstitions, we should rejoice in every thing which tends to remove these superfluous vanities, which interrupt our cordial intercourse and communion. It is against the traditional rule of faith, and the exaggerated authority of the Church, that the force of every Protestant argument should be directed. If these can be overthrown, smaller differences will immediately subside: while these remain, reconciliation can neither be obtained nor desired. However temporizing be the policy of her government, the Church of Rome is inflexible in maintaining her doctrinal opinions; and whatever be the talent or the subtlety of her apologists, her authorized professions must always be the same. The charm of infallibility is destroyed for ever, when the Church shall decree that to be error,

which she hath previously decreed to be truth.

It is plain from the accomplished words of prophecy, that such a power was to exist: if men may presume to interpret what the event has not revealed, it is also ordered in the counsels of the Father, that this power shall be no more. The rapid revolutions of the age have led men with too much fondness to anticipate the days of the true Catholic emancipation; and the cautious theologian will rather rejoice in hope that the time is limited, than presume to number the days of the beginning or the end. Be it our wisdom not to renovate a power, which may be decaying; not to propagate a tyranny, which ought to be subdued. Let us not be beguiled by the insidious sophistry, nor connive in the easy credulity, with which the cause of error is maintained; nor while the Romanist acknowledges one practical infirmity, let us fail to insist upon the ruined claims of an infallible Church. With the Bible in our hands, let us dwell on the prophecies, which foretell the progress of

apostasy, as an evil of which it becomes us to beware; and, on the same authority, let us learn to distinguish the revelations of God from the traditions of men, and found our faith on the imperishable rock of scriptural truth.

That the effects of bigotry, superstition, and intolerance, may be counteracted with success, and be succeeded by charity and forbearance, by holiness and meekness, and the “faith which worketh by love,” should be the prayer and the effort of every disciple of the Lord. May reconciliation and union, peace, holiness, and truth, in all the variety of conflicting opinions, be our object and our aim: and may the blessing of God be given to every thing which tends to confirm the authority of his Holy Scriptures, to establish and define the power which he has given to his Church, for edification and not for destruction, and remove from it every corruption and occasion of offence in its principles, in its worship, in its ministry, and its faith. United in love, and founded upon everlasting truth, may the several members be so compacted, that the uni-

versal Church shall be free from spot, and blemish, and wrinkle; a faithful servant of God, worshipping him in spirit and in truth, and holding the head, from which all the body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

SERMON V.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE NONCONFORMISTS
COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

1 COR. xi. 19.

For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

HOWEVER the opinions of men may be divided on the precise nature of Christian unity, or on the means of renewing and maintaining it, it was certainly the design and the prayer^a of Christ, that his disciples should be one; and the several figures^b under which the Church is described, all agree in representing it as a compact and united body. It would nevertheless be difficult to fix upon any period in its history, in which

^a John xvii. 11. 21—23.

^b John x. 16. xv. 5.
Rom. xii. 5. Ephes. ii. 20, 21.

the perfection of this unity was exhibited, with the small exception of the time when it was under the immediate government of the Apostles, “and the multitude of them
“ that believed were of one heart and of
“ one soul^c.” The Apostles themselves are found remonstrating upon the divisions which in their time began to prevail; and the uninterrupted tradition of the Fathers agrees with our own observation of the manifold disorders of the Christian Church.

Is then the purpose of Christ defeated by these divisions, and are the representations of the prophets concerning the state of the universal Church contradicted by the records of its history? The event hath been foreseen from the beginning; and he who knew what should come to pass, hath spoken of it before it came to pass, that we may believe, and be confirmed in the faith, by seeing the fulfilment of his predictions. “Woe unto the world because
“ of offences! for it must needs be that
“ offences come; but woe to that man

^c Acts iv. 32.

“ by whom the offence cometh^d!” The necessity of the offence originates in the perverseness of the human will, and offers no excuse to the individual in whose misconduct it hath its operation. In the same sense, our Lord declares to his disciples, “ It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him through whom they come^e!” The Apostle in the text adopts the same language concerning the schisms or divisions which obtained in the Church of Corinth; and the reason which he assigns for believing the report which had reached him, sufficiently proves that he was not surprised by the communication, nor unprepared to receive it: “ I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you^f.”

While therefore we grieve for the offence, and would reclaim the offender, it cannot

^d Matt. xviii. 7. ^e Luke xvii. 1. ^f 1 Cor. xi. 18, 19.

disturb our Christian faith, if there be a fulfilment of the words of prophecy in the present divisions and disorders of the Christian Church. The mainspring of these divisions, as they exist in this country, is the popular claim of the right of private judgment, and unlimited inquiry in matters of religion. In immediate connection with this master principle of Dissent, is the assumed independence of the primitive Churches, and a consequent aversion from national Establishments, with a misapprehension of the nature of ecclesiastical unity. Although it is justly acknowledged, that there are in the New Testament “principles, precepts, and precedents, sufficiently plain to form the outlines of Church government^g,” there is also much doubt

^g Winter’s Pastoral Letters on Nonconformity, p. 25.
 “To those who are accustomed to attach superlative importance to the constitutional form of Christian Churches, it may appear a notion bordering upon heterodoxy, that the New Testament, our only rule in matters of faith and practice, does not furnish specific directions in what is deemed by them so essential a particular. Let it however be remarked, that while the *form* of government is left thus indefinite and

expressed whether Christ left any form of ecclesiastical polity, or delegated any power to his ministers ; or whether they acted on any uniform plan in the organization of the Church. The apostolical succession of the ministry is also denounced as a mere pretence ; the claim of the people to choose their own pastors is insisted upon ; the orders of the Bishop and the Presbyter are confounded ; and not only is the use of the word “ Sacraments ” rejected, but their spiritual grace also is depreciated and denied. These principles are in immediate opposition to those of the Romanist ; and if those of the one have a tendency to despotism, those of the other have too much of the popular or democratic form. Our purpose is to delineate them in the language of modern writers, and to com-

“ uncertain, the *principles* of ecclesiastical government
“ are laid down in the apostolic writings with the ut-
“ most clearness : principles invariable, common to
“ every modification of outward circumstance, and which
“ are all that the divine wisdom has seen fit to render
“ binding.” Conder on Protestant Nonconformity, p.
216.

pare them with the text and the arguments of the Scriptures.

1. Dissenters, “individually and separately,^h” “assert the right of private judgment, the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and the necessity of free inquiryⁱ :” and it is their first principle, that “every man has an unequivocal right to inquire and judge for himself; to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience; to vindicate his own principles, and to invite others to embrace them^k.” This is publicly declared to be the “right of every man, a right derived imme-

^h A Series of Letters addressed to the Church and Congregation assembling at the Great Meeting, Coggeshall; containing a complete Narrative of the cruel and unmerited Persecution of which the Rev. J. Fielding has been the subject for more than twelve months past: written by himself. p. 80.

ⁱ Particulars of the Life of a Dissenting Minister; written by himself: with occasional Reflections illustrative of the Education and professional State of the Dissenting Clergy, and of the Character and Manners of the Dissenters in general. p. viii.

^k Williams’s Religious Liberty stated and enforced on the Principles of Scripture and Common Sense, in Six Essays, p. 95.

“diately from the Almighty Creator¹,” and
“every man, in every age and in every
“country, has a sacred unalienable right
“to worship God according to his con-
“science, which no individuals, or govern-
“ments, or legislatures, can, without in-
“justice and oppression, directly or indi-
“rectly infringe . . . it is from heaven^m.”
“No one is at liberty to concede a supe-
“riority of a legislative nature to another
“in matters of religious duty, or to sur-
“render any portion of that moral freedom
“which is the basis of accountableness.
“Power, in relation to conscience, cannot
“be delegated; the will of another cannot
“become our law; the usurpation is im-
“piety. The free agency of man not only
“involves a sacred unalienable right, which
“the magistrate cannot lawfully infringe;
“but it imposes upon every individual a
“duty, from which there is no dischargeⁿ.”

¹ Resolution passed at a Special General Meeting of the Unitarian Fund, Aug. 20, 1813. Compare Williams, p. 183. ^m Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty. See Evan. Mag. 1815, p. 512. Williams, p. 2, 3. ⁿ Conder, p. 75.

“ I infer the right of free inquiry from the
 “ duty of investigation, and I do not ex-
 “ pect that any person who admits the lat-
 “ ter will dispute the former^o.”

It is remarkable, that in these assertions there is but a cursory reference to the authority of a scriptural rule, to which, when they are made subservient, we do not deny the duty of investigation, nor the right of private judgment. But when we read that it belongeth not unto the natural man to know “ the things of the Spirit of God, for
 “ foolishness is in him, neither can he
 “ know them, because they are spiritually
 “ discerned^p ;” when we read also, that
 “ unlearned and unstable men have wrest-
 “ ed the Scriptures to their own destruc-
 “ tion^q ;” we perceive no trace of the inherent, unalienable, heaven-descended right of free inquiry. We know that the great body of the Gentiles, whom the Apostles instructed, had no means besides oral instruction of prosecuting this inquiry. Although Saint Paul exhorts the Thessalo-

^o Williams, p. 56. ^p 1 Cor. ii. 14. ^q 2 Peter iii. 16.

nians to “prove” and make trial of “all things,” he at the same time exhorts them to “hold fast that which is good^r :” and although Saint John instructs the disciples to “try the spirits, whether they are “of God,” he nevertheless prescribes the specific standard by which the inquiry should be determined^s. Hence we infer, that there hath been from the beginning some limit of inquiry, some rule of interpretation, some settled scheme of religious profession, generally admitted in the Church, to which the multitude were willing to defer, and from which no man could deviate without offence. This inference is confirmed by the circumstance of Timothy’s being directed to “hold fast the “form of sound words,” and to “continue “in the things which he had learned and “been assured of, knowing of whom he “had learned them ;” an exhortation which is of the more importance, because Timothy had not only “from a child known the “Holy Scriptures,” but he was also charged

^r 1 Thess. v. 21.

^s 1 John iv. 1, 2.

to “keep the good thing which had been
 “committed to him by the Holy Ghost,
 “which was dwelling in him^t.” Neither
 Paul, nor Peter, nor the men of Antioch
 were found capable of deciding the contro-
 versy concerning circumcision, which was
 authoritatively determined by the Apostles
 and elders, to whom it was referred^u.
 Among the Corinthians, where the spirit
 of inquiry and the claims of private judg-
 ment were most vehement, they were so
 far from meeting the approbation of the
 Apostle, that he considered their advo-
 cates, “not as spiritual, but as carnal, and
 “as babes in Christ^x :” and that he warn-
 ed them, “If any man among you seem-
 “eth to be wise in this world, let him be-
 “come a fool, that he may be wise^y.” It
 is important also to notice, that heresies,
 a word which in its original signification
 denotes deliberative choices, or private
 judgments, are classed by the Apostle
 among “the works of the flesh^z,” and

^t 2 Tim. i. 13, 14. iii. 14, 15. ^u Acts xv. 2. 6. 22. 25.
 31. xvi. 4. ^x 1 Cor. iii. 1. ^y 1 Cor. iii. 18. ^z Galat. v. 20.

among those offences which must arise for the manifestation of those that are approved^a, by resisting and avoiding them. It was part of the office of Titus to “reject
 “an heretic after the first and second ad-
 “monition^b :” and the Romans were exhorted to “mark them which cause divisions
 “and offences contrary to the doctrine
 “which they had received, and to avoid
 “them: for they that are such,” the authors and abettors of these offences “serve
 “not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own
 “belly; and by good words and fair speeches
 “deceive the hearts of the simple^c.”

2. So little countenance do the Scriptures afford to the assumed right of private judgment, in conformity with which is the doctrine of the independence of the primitive Churches, and a consequent aversion from a national establishment. “The first
 “general principle on which we found our
 “dissent is this: that no civil magistrate
 “can have any right, authority, or power
 “over the consciences or religion of men;

^a 1 Cor. xi. 19. ^b Titus iii. 10. ^c Romans xvi. 17, 18.

“ that his claiming to himself the inter-
 “ pretation of the Scriptures . . . is assuming
 “ a power with which no civil magistrate
 “ can be invested, without directly oppos-
 “ ing the very genius and spirit of that di-
 “ vine religion which it pretends to esta-
 “ blish^d.” Of the seven “ principal reasons”
 of nonconformity “ which influence nine
 “ tenths of the Dissenters of the present
 “ day, who know any thing of their prin-
 “ ciples,” the first is, “ the frame and con-
 “ stitution of the Established Church, it
 “ being national^e.” They dissent “ espe-
 “ cially from national establishments, be-
 “ cause” they “ think that in them an au-
 “ thority is assumed, at once injurious to
 “ the authority of Jesus Christ, and sub-
 “ versive of Christian liberty^f.” “ A form

^d Flower’s Answer to the Inquiry, Why are you a Dissenter? p. 5.

^e Bicheno’s Glance at the History of Christianity and of English Nonconformity, p. 18, 19.

^f Ibid. p. 21. “ Whatsoever influence it was requisite
 “ should attach to certain offices in the Church, influ-
 “ ence derived from secular circumstances, and resting
 “ upon worldly prejudices, so much opposed to the spi-

“ of national Christianity . . . the moment
 “ it is received into the mind, must neces-
 “ sarily darken it as to the nature of the
 “ kingdom of Christ^g ;” and “ the total
 “ want of scriptural support which cha-
 “ racterizes an ecclesiastical establishment,
 “ and its obvious tendency to weaken the
 “ authority of Scripture over the con-
 “ sciences of men, by assuming such au-
 “ thority in itself, appear . . . incontrover-
 “ tible arguments in opposition to that
 “ mode of supporting and propagating the
 “ Gospel^h .” “ No new obligation results
 “ from the prosperity of the Christian
 “ cause, nor from the circumstance of its
 “ being patronized by the civil ruler, which
 “ renders it more a man’s duty now, as a

“ rit of the Gospel, must clearly be foreign from the
 “ design of Christianity. . . . The system which asso-
 “ ciates wealth and power with ecclesiastical station,
 “ adopts an accidental evil,—that is to say, the illegiti-
 “ mate ascendancy of these corrupt sources of influence,
 “ —in the character of a good, and renders nugatory
 “ the force of every counteractive principle.” Conder,
 p. 146, 147.

^g Jones’s History of the Waldenses, vol. ii. p. 228.

^h Winter, p. 47.

“ member of society, to embrace a profes-
 “ sion, with which he would then have
 “ trembled at being identified . . . The per-
 “ son who should yield obedience now to
 “ any of its requirements, merely because
 “ they are sanctioned by political autho-
 “ rity, would be acting from a motive that as
 “ much negatives the religious character of
 “ his compliance, as though it were the re-
 “ sult of compulsion. He is as really giving
 “ the preference to the authority of man, as
 “ if, under circumstances which placed its
 “ claims in direct competition with those
 “ of the divine authority, he carried out
 “ the principle to its extreme tendency,
 “ and rejected Christianity at the command
 “ of Cæsarⁱ.”

It cannot be denied, that the lot of the

ⁱ Conder, p. 90. “ Could I subscribe to every senti-
 “ ment and every expression in the Liturgy, and did I
 “ think the use of a form of prayer not only lawful, but
 “ more agreeable to the mind of Christ than free prayer,
 “ I could not become a member of the Church of Eng-
 “ land, because it enjoins even spiritual services on an
 “ authority, which is, in its origin, of this world. While
 “ I desire to ‘ render unto Cæsar the things which are
 “ Cæsar’s,’ there I must limit my submission to secular

Apostles was cast in a time, when the prophetic promise^k had not been fulfilled, and kings had not become the “nursing Fathers,” nor queens the “nursing mothers” of the Church; and when many important considerations would naturally combine, to prevent the Apostles from denying or maintaining the right of the temporal sovereign in the affairs of religion. It was necessary to prove that the Christian religion originated, not “in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God^l;” but it should be remembered, that the Apostles, as Jews, were accustomed to an established religion, and to the union of civil and ecclesiastical authority, and that not only did they conform with this combined power, but that our Saviour actually recommended obedience to the Scribes, for they sat “in the seat of Moses^m,” which they occupied without any divine authority, and from which they undertook to interpret the Law

“authority, that I may render unto God the things which are God’s.” Winter, p. 85.

^k Isaiah xlix. 23. ^l 1 Cor. ii. 5. ^m Matt. xxiii. 2.

of the great prophet of the nation. The Heathens had also been accustomed to the same united authority of the throne and the altarⁿ. These considerations may account for the supposed “total want of “Scriptural authority” for an ecclesiastical establishment, and may weaken the “strong presumption” which is founded on the omission of a more distinct reference to these establishments, “that such a mode “of preserving or maintaining the form of “Christianity was neither necessary nor “expedient^o.” It is true, indeed, that God “*might*” have removed the impediments to these establishments; but it is equally true that he might have prevented the formation of them, if they had been contrary to his will. If our argument was not confined to the view of Scriptural authority, which is far from being decisive against an ecclesiastical establishment, we might refer to the times and places in which the legal esta-

ⁿ “Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phœbique sacerdos.”
Virg. Æn. iii. 80.

^o Winter, p. 37.

blishment of independency and presbytery excited no offence; and indeed it is even now made an objection to the Church of England, that she “ holds no communion with any other Protestant national Church in Europe^p.” But the evidence of Scripture is more complete against the position, of which it is said, that “ all history attests” the truth, that “ in the first ages of Christianity all the Churches of Christ were independent, and each . . . regulated its own concerns, owning no authority in spiritual and ecclesiastical affairs, but that of Jesus Christ^q.” It is manifest from his history and from his epistles, that “ the care of all the Churches” devolved upon the Apostle of the Gentiles, that his jurisdiction was provincial, and that his letters were addressed in a circular form^s, and not to the members of distinct and separate congregations.

3. That the unity of the Church “ cannot imply a perfect unity of opinion is”

^p Ibid. p. xiv. ^q Bicheno, p. 8. ^r 2 Cor. xi. 28.

^s Coloss. iv. 16. Acts xvi. 4.

said to be “ evident from the nature of the
“ case; for no two persons, who allow
“ themselves to think at all, can on all
“ points think perfectly alike^t;” and “ it
“ can only be founded on equality of know-
“ ledge; for while one man has more know-
“ ledge than another, it seems unavoidably
“ to follow, that his opinions will be more
“ correct. Moreover, in a world where
“ candour, modesty, and forbearance, are
“ reckoned among the virtues, some differ-
“ ences of opinion seem necessary for their
“ exercise, so that I am doubtful whether
“ perfect unanimity of sentiment will take
“ place in the Church of Christ, until the
“ virtues of the present state shall be ex-
“ changed for the sublimer graces of the
“ celestial and eternal world^u.” It is main-
tained, concerning uniformity, that “ with
“ regard to the Catholic Church, this can
“ manifestly form no part of its essential
“ unity, first, because . . . the thing is in itself
“ morally impossible . . . secondly, because
“ neither outward rites, nor forms of polity,

^t Williams, p. 9.

^u Ibid. p. 70.

“ nor human creeds, in respect of which
“ this uniformity is required, belong to
“ the essence of religion, or to the essential
“ nature of the Church, as a visible reli-
“ gious society^x.” “ The Church of Christ
“ is indeed mystically one body, but it is
“ the body of Christ, and in that sense, like
“ its divine Head, invisible:” neither can
it be “ locally visible,” or “ locally one,”
nor “ politically visible, that is to say, as
“ a whole comprised in one political so-
“ ciety^y.” “ The unity of the Church of
“ Christ is essentially connected with the
“ spirituality of its nature. It is a unity
“ opposed to multiplicity, not to internal
“ variety. By the necessity of its nature, it
“ is indivisibly one ; and it ought not, as
“ respects the duty of its members, to be
“ otherwise than morally united. The no-
“ tion of union, however, includes that of
“ individual difference . . . moral union re-
“ quires neither an identity nor likeness of
“ external form, but simply the presence
“ of predominant qualities in the character

^x Conder, p. 35.

^y Ibid. p. 37.

“ of each individual, as the basis of the
 “ cohesion of sympathy^z.” Thus is the
 Christian Church considered, “ as built on
 “ an union of affection and of sentiment,
 “ as far as respects the fundamentals of re-
 “ ligion, but as by no means requiring a
 “ perfect uniformity of opinion or of re-
 “ ligious rites^a.”

Too much importance cannot be at-
 tached to love and kind affections, to hum-
 bleness of mind, to mutual forbearance and
 condescension; but these virtues do not of
 themselves constitute that “ unity of the
 “ Spirit,” that “ unity of faith and of the
 “ knowledge of the Son of God^b,” which
 the history of the Apostles exemplifies,
 their precepts recommend, and their pro-
 mises encourage, and without the strict ad-
 mission of which, the vanity of heresy and
 the uncharitableness of division are im-
 practicable and imaginary offences. It was
 under the gracious influence of the Spirit,
 that the first Christians “ continued sted-

^z Conder, p. 54, 55. ^a Williams, p. 183. ^b Ephes. iv.
 3. 13.

“fastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellow-
 “ship,” and met “with one accord in the
 “temple,” and that “the multitude of the
 “believers were of one heart and one
 “soul^c,” so that among them, notwithstanding
 the difference of their acquirements, a
 perfect unanimity of sentiment did prevail.
 Their practice affords the best illustration
 of the several addresses and exhortations of
 the Apostle concerning a perfect unity of
 opinion and uniformity of religious wor-
 ship. His prayer for the Romans was this :
 “Now the God of patience and consola-
 “tion grant you to be likeminded one to-
 “ward another,” *το αυτο φρονειν εν αλληλοις*, to
 think the same thing one with another,
 “according to Christ Jesus: that ye may
 “with one mind and one mouth glo-
 “rify God, even the Father of our Lord
 “Jesus Christ^d.” In conformity with this
 prayer, he besought them to “mark and
 “avoid those who caused divisions and
 “offences contrary to the doctrine which
 “they had received^e.” He was equally

^c Acts ii. 42, 46. iv. 32. ^d Rom. xv. 5, 6. ^e Rom. xvi. 17.

earnest in his entreaty to the Corinthians :
 “ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the
 “ name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye
 “ all speak the same thing, and that there
 “ be no divisions among you ; but that ye
 “ be perfectly joined together in the same
 “ mind and in the same judgment^f.” To
 the Philippians he addresses the affecting
 exhortation, “ If there be any consolation
 “ in Christ, if any comfort of love, . . . fulfil
 “ ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having
 “ the same love, being of one accord, of
 “ one mind^g.” But more than all which
 Apostles have taught is the prayer of Christ
 himself for his disciples : “ Holy Father,
 “ keep through thine own name those
 “ whom thou hast given me, that they may
 “ be one, as we are . . . that they all may
 “ be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I
 “ in thee, that they also may be one in us :
 “ that the world may believe that thou hast
 “ sent me. And the glory which thou
 “ gavest me, I have given them, that they
 “ may be one, even as we are one : I in

^f 1 Cor. i. 10.

^g Philipp. ii. 1, 2.

“ them, and thou in me, that they may be
 “ made perfect in one ; and that the world
 “ may know that thou hast sent me^h.”

4. It was our blessed Lord himself, who gave to his Church, “ some, Apostles; and
 “ some, prophets; and some, evangelists;
 “ and some, pastors and teachers; for the
 “ work of the ministry, for the knitting toge-
 “ ther of the saints, for the edifying of the
 “ body of Christⁱ.” But there are some who scruple not “ to question the expediency
 “ of an order of men called ministers,” and to assert that “ authority for such an order
 “ there is certainly none in the Christian
 “ Scriptures^k.” “ Our Lord has not al-

^h John xvii. 11. 21. 23. ⁱ Ephes. iv. 11, 12.

^k Life of a Dissenting Minister, p. 121. 123. Thus in speaking of the Apostolic age, it is said; “ The exercise of the function of the preacher was open to the
 “ members of the Church; it was in fact, in many cases,
 “ a duty resulting from the extraordinary gifts with
 “ which the first disciples were for the most part en-
 “ dowed. The distinction of clergy and laity had then
 “ no existence; it receives no countenance from the
 “ Apostolic records. All the members of the Christian
 “ community were alike God’s clergy, a holy priesthood
 “ by virtue of their regeneration, a kind of first fruits of
 “ his creatures.” Conder, p. 182, 183. The “ distinc-

“lowed his ministers to assume any authority over the consciences of his disciples¹,” nor conferred, “either on mi-

“tion of clergy and laity . . . is in itself an error of no small practical importance, inasmuch as it involves the notion of a mediatorial order in the Church of Christ, analogous to the Jewish priesthood. To this notion is to be referred the power supposed to be inseparable from the Apostolic succession of regenerating by baptism, of confirming, absolving, and of ordaining to the like functions.” Ibid. p. 207. note.

To the principle laid down in this note, in connection with the doctrine of the Unitarians, may be referred the following protest, delivered at the marriage of the parties, April 12, 1819. and subsequently published in the public journals.

“PROTEST.—To Mr. Jones, (of the parish of West Ham, Essex,) usually entitled the Rev. Mr. Jones.

“The undersigned being Protestant Dissenters, present to you the following protest against the marriage ceremony as at present performed, and to which, according to the laws of England, they are *compelled* to subscribe. They disclaim all intention of acting disrespectfully, either to the legislature or to the civil office before whom they stand; they lament that they are placed in a situation so unnatural, as that even forbearance towards what they esteem an established error would be a formal recantation of opinions which they received on conviction, and which they can only

¹ Williams, p. 73.

“ nisters or magistrates, any authority to
“ restrain religious worship, or repress pub-

“ renounce on similar grounds. Against the marriage
“ ceremony they most solemnly protest, because it makes
“ marriage a religious, instead of a civil act :

“ Because parts of the ceremony are highly indelicate,
“ and must to every correctly constituted mind be ex-
“ tremely offensive :

“ Because the man is required to worship the woman,
“ though the founder of Christianity has declared, that
“ God is the only object for the Christian to worship :

“ Because it requires the recognition of the doctrine of
“ the Trinity, than which nothing can be more oppres-
“ sive to those who disbelieve conscientiously, and after
“ patient investigation, that doctrine ; conceiving that
“ the whole of Revelation fully sanctions their joining
“ the Apostle Paul in declaring, that ‘ To us there is
“ but one God and one mediator between God and men,
“ the man Christ Jesus :’

“ Because, as Christians and Protestant Dissenters, it
“ is impossible that they can sanction the interference of
“ any human institution with matters which concern
“ their faith and conscience :

“ Because, as knowing nothing of a priesthood in
“ Christianity, the submission to a ceremony performed
“ by a person in ‘ holy orders, or pretended holy orders,’
“ is painful and humiliating to their feelings :

“ Because, as warm and firm believers in the truth of
“ Christianity, they disbelieve and abominate the doc-
“ trine of the Trinity, in the name of which the mar-
“ riage ceremony is performed ;

“ lic opinion^m.” “ Dominion over con-
 “ science appears,” in the judgment of the
 Independents, “ a direct violation of the
 “ Gospel. We are subject to no authority
 “ in matters of religion, but that of Jesus
 “ Christⁿ,” who “ is sovereign in his Church
 “ and in all spiritual concerns. None share
 “ with him in his legislative or his ju-
 “ dicial authority^o.” “ Protestant Dissent-
 “ ers, who hold the supremacy of Christ as

“ And because, as servants of Jesus, they worship the
 “ one living and true God, his God and their God, his
 “ Father and their Father.

(Signed)

HENRY B. FEARON,

JOHANNA THOMPSON,

Members of the Church of God, meeting
 at the Crescent, Jewin-street, London.”

^m Williams, p. 183. “ A legislative right of any sort,
 “ over the souls or consciences of others, the Almighty
 “ has never delegated to a created being; nor could he
 “ delegat^e so awful a trust without a surrender of his in-
 “ defeasible claims as God; without putting it into the
 “ power of his creature, who would then no longer be
 “ his free subject to appeal from the divine jurisdiction,
 “ and excuse his disobedience by alleging, ‘ the man
 “ whom thou didst set over me to be a god, he com-
 “ manded me, and I did it.’” Conder, p. 66.

ⁿ Fielding, p. 80.

^o Bicheno, p. 6.

“ first and last, and midst and without
 “ end,” maintain, “ that the will of Christ
 “ is to be sought, and can only be found, in
 “ the sense of the *whole body* formally ex-
 “ pressed on mature deliberation. For it
 “ is the maxim of independent or congre-
 “ gational Churches, *Vox populi vox Dei*,
 “ The voice of the people is the voice of
 “ God^p.”

It is not easy to reconcile these positions with the Scriptures, which, without any allusion to the “ equal rights” of the people, define the authority of the ministry, and prescribe its proper offices. It is a fact which cannot be denied, that Jesus did choose first, the Twelve, and afterwards, the Seventy, and send them with the utmost solemnity to discharge their several commissions : “ He that heareth you,” said

P Bass’s Address to Congregational Churches, occasioned by the Publication of a Dispute arising from a Dereliction of their Principles of Discipline and Government, by a Christian Society of that order at Coggeshall, submitted to the candid Consideration of all the Friends of Peace and Piety of every Denomination. p. 13.

he, “ heareth me ; and he that despiseth
 “ you despiseth me ; and he that despiseth
 “ me despiseth him that sent me^q.” After
 his resurrection, he renewed and ratified the
 powers of his Apostles : “ Peace be unto
 “ you : as my Father hath sent me, even so
 “ send I you . . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost :
 “ whosoever sins ye remit, they are re-
 “ mitted unto them ; and whosoever sins
 “ ye retain, they are retained.” “ All power
 “ is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
 “ Go ye therefore, and make disciples of
 “ all nations, baptizing them in the name
 “ of the Father, and of the Son, and of
 “ the Holy Ghost ; and, lo, I am with you
 “ alway, even unto the end of the world^r.”

If the powers which this commission conveyed may be interpreted by a reference to the practice of the Apostle of the Gentiles, it comprehended what would now be called a dominion over conscience, and an authority of restraining religious worship and repressing public opinion. In the Second

^q Luke x. 16. ^r John xx. 21—23. Matth. xxviii.
 18—20.

Epistle to the Corinthians^s, he especially insists upon this spiritual authority; for though he walked in the flesh, he did not “war after the flesh: for the weapons of his “warfare were not carnal, but mighty “through God to the pulling down of “strong holds.” He used this authority in “casting down imaginations, and every “high thing that exalteth itself against “the knowledge of God, and in bringing “into captivity every thought to the “obedience of Christ;” for this was an act, not of private endeavour, but of ministerial power, in virtue of which the Apostle was ready “to revenge all disobedience.” He adds, “for though I should boast some- “what more of our authority, which the “Lord hath given us for edification, and “not for destruction, I should not be “ashamed.” He refers more than once to the declaration and maintenance of this authority, which enabled him to restrain and coerce, and under the sanction of which he delivered Hymeneus and Alexander to Satan, “that they might learn

^s 2 Cor. x. 4—6.

“not to blaspheme.^t” He charged Titus also to “reject an heretic after the first “and second admonition.^u” So plain was the Apostle’s authority over faith, and in repressing private judgment and public opinion. In restraining religious worship, he gave to the Corinthians^x rules for their personal conduct and appearance in the congregation; he prescribed the method of celebrating the Supper of the Lord, and the order of their public ministrations, and proposed to set other things in order, when he should come himself; and required that all things should be done “decently and in “order.” The same authority was exerted by St. John, when he required of the elect lady not to receive any into her house who brought not the doctrine of Christ^y, and when he threatened to remember the conduct of Diotrephes, who had not received him^z.

5. In opposition to this authority it is common to allege the sentence of our Lord, “The princes of the Gentiles exer-

^t 1 Tim. i. 20. ^u Titus iii. 10. ^x 1 Cor. xi. xiv.
^y 2 John 10. ^z 3 John 10.

“ cise dominion over them, and they that
“ are great exercise authority upon them.
“ But it shall not be so among you: but
“ whosoever will be great among you,
“ let him be your minister; and whoso-
“ ever will be chief among you, let him
“ be your servant: even as the Son of
“ man came not to be ministered unto,
“ but to minister, and to give his life a
“ ransom for many ^a.” It is not necessary
to refer to the external evidence of apo-
stolical practice to prove the misapplication
of this text. Our Lord was speaking to his
Apostles, and with allusion to the singular
ambition which two of their number had
betrayed; and the object of his discourse
was to teach them, that they should not
presume one over another in the exercise
of the equal authority which they had re-
ceived. He addresses them as Apostles,
and as Apostles only, nor does he make
any mention, either direct or indirect, of
the people to whom they were appointed to
minister. It is not possible, that the sen-
tence should be designed to exclude the

^a Matth. xx. 25—28.

degrees of ministerial order; for our Lord, at the very time that he proposed his own example to their imitation, unquestionably possessed higher authority than they did; and in executing their important commission, they would follow his steps, not by receding from their appropriate dignity, but by exercising its duties in unity among themselves, and with condescension to the weakness of other men.

6. There are some who are unwilling to pay any “regard to the long disputed subject of apostolical succession,” under a persuasion, “that the postulatum is a mere fiction, and that the ground on which the Protestant writers have proceeded in contending for it is altogether untenable^b.” The same sentiment is more coarsely expressed, and an attempt is made to excite derision at “the zeal, with which some clergymen trace their divine right very accurately up to the great — of Babylon^c.” If this was our only lineage and descent, it would not be worthy of defence, even though it is in the same line

^b Jones, vol. i. p. 11. ^c Williams, p. 68. note.

that we have received the Sacraments and the Scriptures, which are not therefore the less venerable or authentic. The succession of the Christian ministry after the time of the Apostles, must be and has been most ably vindicated upon other authorities, than those to which we profess to appeal, and which are not capable of determining the question beyond the third or the fourth generation. We know that Jesus was appointed by God^d: we know that he sent the Apostles as the Father sent him^e; and we know also that they ordained the seven deacons^f. Again: we know that Jesus, after his ascension, appointed the Apostle of the Gentiles^g; that he appointed Timothy and Titus, and conferred on them severally authority to ordain elders in every place^h. Thus the succession is complete, as far as the sacred records extend, and there is no intimation that it should ever be broken. The prescription, that it should not be

^d Matth. iii. 17. xvii. 5. Heb. v. 5. ^e John xx. 21.

^f Acts vi. 6. ^g Acts xxii. 21. xxvi. 17. 1 Tim. i. 12.

^h 1 Tim. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6. 14. ii. 2. Titus i. 5.

broken, was the less necessary to the Jews, who had been always accustomed to a successive priesthood.

7. It is admitted, that “ the distinction
 “ between Bishop and Presbyter, or elder,
 “ seems to have prevailed early in the Chris-
 “ tian Church, yet it is demonstrably with-
 “ out any solid foundation in the New Tes-
 “ tamentⁱ.” The observation is just, if it be
 confined to the mere name and designation;
 for Bishop and Presbyter are, in scriptural
 language, convertible terms^k. The of-
 fice, however, of the Bishop as he is now
 called, or of the Apostle as was the more
 ancient title, is demonstrably distinct from
 that of the Presbyter.

“ Protestant Nonconformists hold, that
 “ there are two distinct orders of ecclesi-
 “ astical officers, and only two, specified
 “ in the New Testament, as having the
 “ ordinary superintendence of Christian
 “ societies, Bishops and Deacons. By
 “ Bishops they understand the pastors, or
 “ ruling elders, of the congregation; by

ⁱ Jones, vol. i. p. 279. ^k Acts xx. 17. 28. Titus i. 5. 7.

“ Deacons, the officers appointed to manage the secular concerns of the Church, more especially to take care of the poor. On this point they are at issue with Episcopalians, who contend for three orders of Clergy, as of apostolic institution, under the threefold distinction of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons¹.” There is, however, a “ sect, or at least a part of it,” which “ thinks, that there are three orders of ministers in the Church

¹ Conder, p. 176. “ These three orders are in fact only three gradations of rank: the same office, with the exception of certain prerogatives arbitrarily attached to each, being common to all the three. That distinction which we observe broadly laid down in Scripture between the province of the Pastor and that of the Deacon on the ground of office, is, upon the Episcopalian hypothesis, made to consist entirely in subordination The hierarchy, however, instead of consisting of only three orders, is found to be composed of Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Prebendaries, Archdeacons, Presbyters, and Deacons; the latter two classes being distributed into Rectors, Vicars, and Curates, so that the question of the Apostolic origin of three orders, except as respects their supposed subordination of rank, becomes wholly irrelevant.” Ibid. Bicheno, p. 18. n. Winter, p. 42. Flower, p. 18.

“ of Christ ; Deacons, who may baptize ;
 “ Elders, who may, beside baptizing, do
 “ what pertains to the Sacrament ; and
 “ Messengers, who have a supervision of
 “ Churches, though those Churches do not
 “ devolve on them exclusively the ordi-
 “ nation of the other functionaries. In
 “ fact, they are Episcopalians or Lutherans
 “ in Church discipline, without adopting
 “ the name of Bishops, and without
 “ claiming for the Messengers the exclusive
 “ right of ordination^m.”

It is however the exclusive right of ordination, even more than the right of ruling and judging in the Church of Christ, which distinguishes a true apostolical episcopacy from the Superintendents of the Lutherans, or the Messengers of the Antipædobaptists. We read that the great Apostle and High Priest of our profession called both the Twelveⁿ, the Seventy^o, and the Apostle of the Gentiles^p ; that the Apostles laid

^m Life of a Dissenting Minister, p. 110. Comp. p. 108.

ⁿ Matt. x. 1. Mark iii. 14. vi. 7. Luke ix. 1, 2. ^o Luke x. 1. ^p Acts xxii. 21. xxvi. 17. 1 Tim. i. 12.

hands upon the seven Deacons^q; that the Apostle Paul, in conjunction with Barnabas, “ordained elders in every Church^r ;” and that he also ordained Timothy, “with “the laying on of the hands of the pres-
“bytery^s.” We read also, that Timothy and Titus, not distinguished in scriptural language, but by primitive writers called Apostles^t, were appointed and in-

^q Acts vi. 6. ^r Acts xiv. 23. ^s 1 Tim. iv. 14.

^t “The Apostles however sustained an office and a
“character altogether peculiar, and, in the nature of
“things, untransferable” . . . and “distinguished from
“that of all succeeding ministers by another circum-
“stance of equal importance. They acted not only
“under a commission, received immediately from the
“hands of Christ ; but with that certain knowledge of
“his will, which they derived from inspiration . . . There
“is however an inferior sense in which we may extend the
“designation of an Apostle to every faithful teacher of the
“Gospel, whom we may consider as the Sent of Christ ;
“but the word, in this acceptation, is significant not of
“either rank or peculiarity of office, but simply of the
“ministerial character. Among the ministers of Christ,
“as such, there is no possible room for gradation of rank,
“because the ministerial office itself admits of no such
“modification : it consists of preaching the Gospel ;
“and if the Gospel is faithfully and intelligibly promul-

structed to ordain the future elders of Ephesus and Crete". The office of ordination, as far as scriptural authority extends, was exclusively appropriated to Apostles, and none but Apostles presumed to exercise it. The delegation of Paul and Barnabas from the Church of Antioch^x cannot be confounded with an original conveyance of ministerial power.

8. "When by death or removal the pas-

gated, the office is fulfilled . . . The ministry is of necessity one in kind ; it must, therefore, as regards the discharge of it by any individual, be either that of 'the spirit of truth,' or of 'the spirit of error;' it is either efficient as the preaching of Christ, or it is wholly inefficient and unauthorized. Official designation, ecclesiastical dignity, can make no difference in the character of the ministry exercised by any man in the Church of Christ. The humblest self-constituted teacher, who is possessed of the appropriate credentials of the ministerial character, in the purity of his doctrines, the success of his labours, and the unblemished tenor of his life, is invested with an *authority* to which no circumstantial additaments of human appointment are requisite to impart validity : it requires no sanction from man, for with man it does not originate." Conder, p. 162. 163. 165. 167.

^u 2 Tim. ii. 2. Titus i. 5. ^x Acts xiii. 3.

“ toral office in any of” their “ Churches
 “ becomes vacant, the choice of a suc-
 “ cessor rests with those who have sustained
 “ the loss^y.” “ No man has a right to
 “ impose these pastors and teachers; they
 “ are to be freely chosen by the people, who
 “ are the sole judges of their qualifications,
 “ and of their abilities for their own particu-
 “ lar edification^z.” “ Every member of the
 “ Church, at any rate, but usually, I believe,
 “ each particular subscriber, (however small
 “ a sum he contributes,) has confessedly an
 “ equal right^a to vote in choosing or dis-
 “ missing the pastor. It is, I apprehend,
 “ a principle commonly admitted, and of
 “ which we boast as an inestimable privi-
 “ lege, that no minister can be imposed
 “ upon us, nor yet taken from us, without
 “ a majority of voices so determine^b.” Thus
 does it appear, that “ the government of
 “ Congregational Churches is strictly po-

^y Winter, p. 99. ^z Bicheno, p. 23. ^a “ The right
 “ of every one to choose his own minister:” “ this
 “ natural right of every Christian to choose his spi-
 “ ritual instructor.” Conder, p. 235. 238. ^b Fielding,
 p. 80.

“ pular^c. Whatever distinctions of rank,
 “ talent, learning, or office, are found a-
 “ mongst them, on any question to be dis-
 “ posed of . . . each brother has his equal
 “ voice . . . their pastors are always the men
 “ of their choice, respecting whom pru-
 “ dence directs them as nearly as possible
 “ to become unanimous, who are set apart
 “ or ordained^d to office by the consent

^c “The purely democratical nature of the primitive
 “ Churches”—“the necessarily democratic character of
 “ voluntary societies.” Conder, p. 234, 235.

^d “Where then, it may be asked, resides the *right* or
 “ power, and in what consists the importance of *ordina-*
 “ *tion*? It is not the source of ministerial authority . . .
 “ It does not admit to the pastoral office; for even in
 “ the episcopal Church, the title to office, which is an
 “ indispensable prerequisite, is derived from the nomi-
 “ nation of the person who has the disposal of the cure.
 “ It is not office, but official character, which episcopal
 “ ordination is supposed to convey; together with what-
 “ soever the advocates of Episcopacy may choose to un-
 “ derstand by those solemn words used by the ordaining
 “ Bishop, (an application of them which Nonconform-
 “ ists deem awfully inappropriate,) ‘Receive ye the Holy
 “ Ghost.’ . . . What then is ordination? The answer
 “ is, a decent and becoming solemnity, adopted from the
 “ Jewish customs by the primitive Church, significant

“ and prayers of the whole body ; when, to
“ shew their fellowship with other churches,
“ neighbouring ministers are invited to as-
“ sist their devotions, who usually com-
“ mend their new pastors to God in prayer,
“ by the primitive usage of laying on of
“ hands... Congregational Churches choose
“ their deacons, according to scriptural di-
“ rection, from among themselves, to re-
“ ceive the liberalities of the people . . .
“ These are chosen by the majority, and
“ ordained to office likewise by the consent

“ of the separation of an individual to some specific
“ appointment in the Christian ministry ; and consti-
“ tuting both a recognition on the part of the officiating
“ presbyters of the ministerial character of the person
“ appointed, and a desirable sanction of the proceedings
“ of the Church. It is however something more than a
“ mere circumstance, the imposition of hands being
“ designed to express that fervent benediction which
“ accompanied the ceremony, and which constitutes the
“ true spirit of the rite. To an occasion, which, when
“ the awful responsibility of the pastoral charge is ade-
“ quately felt, imparts to the prayers and the affectionate
“ aid of those, who are fathers and brethren in the mi-
“ nistry a more especial value, the sign and solemn act
“ of benediction must appear peculiarly appropriate.”

Conder, p. 242—244.

“ and prayers of the whole body . . . are
 “ held accountable to the Church, and are
 “ to be directed by it in the discharge of
 “ their trust. . . . To receive members into
 “ Congregational Churches, or to separate
 “ such as walk disorderly, is the act of the
 “ *whole* Church, in which each communi-
 “ cant, on serious and due deliberation,
 “ concurs. On *all* the members of these
 “ Societies it is incumbent to assist in edi-
 “ fying the Church, at the direction of the
 “ pastors,” who, “ in Church-meetings for
 “ discipline . . . are their chairmen, who
 “ open all business, and assist them to un-
 “ derstand it; and, leading each question
 “ to its proper issue, they take the un-
 “ biassed sense of the body, and pronounce
 “ their sentence.” Some questions “ are
 “ put distinctly to each member by their
 “ pastors, who wait to receive a well-con-
 “ sidered reply^e.” “ When a matter comes
 “ to be really Church-business . . . each
 “ particular member has an equal right to
 “ hear evidence, and give an opinion^f :”

^e Bass, p. 7. 8. 9. 11.

^f Fielding, p. 144. note.

and “the decisions of independent Churches
 “are not the laws of the Medes and Per-
 “sians, but are subject to future revisions,
 “amendments, and alterations; and no
 “resolution, at one meeting for business,
 “however unanimous, can preclude a num-
 “ber of members, who were absent, from
 “the right of submitting to the next any
 “proposition they may deem important
 “and deserving of attention^g.”

These are the practices, the ostensible polity and discipline of the Congregational or Independent Churches; and it is curious to observe the process, by which these practices are accommodated to the Scriptures of the New Testament.

Considering it of high “importance to
 “place in a clear point of view the primi-
 “tive character of Christian assemblies as
 “voluntary societies, because upon this
 “point hinges the whole controversy re-
 “specting ecclesiastical polity^h,” Noncon-

^g Bass, p. 28. ^h Conder, p, 94. . . . “that funda-
 “mental principle of the constitution of Congregational
 “Churches, the voluntary and spiritual nature of Chris-
 “tian societies.” Ibid. p. 235.

formists are accustomed to represent them as “voluntary societies, formed by mutual “agreement,” consisting “of persons believing in Christ, and associating for “their mutual convenience and edification,” as Churches which “were independent, and each one chose its own “pastor or bishop and officers, and regulated its own concerns, owning no authority in spiritual and ecclesiastical “affairs, but that of Jesus Christⁱ.” They were “constitutionally independent, although morally united, and visibly one “Church^k.” When “we take up the New Testament,” says an eminent Dissenter, “and read attentively the Acts of the “Apostles . . . we shall find that the plan “of procedure was simply this . . . When a “number of persons in a city, a town, or “a neighbourhood, believed in Christ, and “avowed their reception of his Gospel by “a submission to his institutions, they “formed themselves into a society, and “agreed to walk together in the faith, the

ⁱ Bicheno, p. 21, 22. S.

^k Conder, p. 86.

“ holiness, and the love of the truth. In
“ this state they made choice of persons
“ duly qualified to preside in their religious
“ assemblies, who were called indiscrimi-
“ nately, Pastors, Elders, or Bishops...They
“ made choice of others, whose office was
“ to inspect the secular affairs of the
“ Church, and to take care of the nume-
“ rous poor... Each of these was set apart
“ to this office by prayer and the laying
“ on of the hands of the Presbytery, that
“ is, of the elders who sustained that office,
“ either in the same society or in others.
“ Every distinct society, or *Church*, as it
“ is uniformly called in the language of
“ the New Testament, was considered
“ competent to manage its own affairs, to
“ receive believing and holy people into
“ their fellowship, to warn the faulty, to
“ exclude the incorrigible, and to elect,
“ though I think not to ordain, those who
“ were to have the rule, or to preside over
“ them¹.”

He who is acquainted with the history

¹ Winter, p. 28—30.

of the Apostles, and hath attentively examined the organization of the Churches which they founded, will not be misled by this representation. In refutation of the supposed mutual agreement and voluntary fellowship of the faithful, he will remember the question of the Apostle to the Romans, in which the alleged order of the primitive Churches is inverted: “How shall they
“ believe in him of whom they have not
“ heard? and how shall they hear without
“ a preacher? and how shall they preach
“ except they be sent^m?” The Churches of Antioch and of Ephesus were not formed upon principles of voluntary association and agreement, but by the earnest labours of the Apostleⁿ; and the ministries which maintained and propagated the truth among them, were not elected by their respective congregations, but constituted by the Apostle, under the sanction of a divine institution, and with a provision for preserving a perpetual succession. The attempts of the Church of Corinth to depart

^m Rom. x. 14, 15. ⁿ Acts xi. 26. xix. 8. 10. xx. 31.

from the established order, and to follow ministers of their own choice, met with the strongest censure of the Apostle^o; and there is certainly nothing in the history of the Apostles, or in their Epistles, which can justify the claim of the people to administer the affairs of the Church, of which the government, after the ascension of Christ, devolved upon the Apostles, and not upon the Presbyters or the people.

It is painful to read of the grievances “ which continually occur in” Dissenting “ Societies, where the factious dispositions “ of popular assemblies are ever at work, “ and render the life of a minister so irksome and so precarious. This is an evil “ which arises from the noble privilege “ which” they “enjoy of choosing” their “ own pastors. Few advantages are secured against abuse; few are more abused “ than this advantage^p.” “ The Life of a

^o 1 Cor. iii. 3, 4.

^p Life of a Dissenting Minister, p. 86. It should be remarked, that Mr. Conder, p. 158—161. contends that “ it is a capital error to represent the Christian minister

“Dissenting Minister,” and “the narrative of unmerited persecution,” sustained by the author of that narrative, exhibit the practical consequences of this privilege in a manner which excites the deepest compassion for the sufferings of individuals, and the liveliest concern for the errors of the community by which they were inflicted. It is obvious to compare them with the plain precepts of the Scriptures, by which we are taught not only that “the labourer is worthy of his hire^q,” but that we should “remember those who have the rule over us, who have spoken unto us the word of the Lord^r,” that we should “obéy them who have the rule over us, and submit ourselves: for they watch for our souls, as men that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and

“as invested with no species of authority, but that which he derives from the choice of the people over which he is appointed to preside, as if his being a minister of Christ depended upon their will, and they could make or unmake him such by suffrage.”

^q Matt. x. 10. Luke x. 7. 1 Cor. x. 9—11. 1 Tim. v. 18. ^r Heb. xiii. 7.

“ not with grief; for that is unprofitable to
“ us^s:” and that we should “ know them
“ who labour among us, and are over us in
“ the Lord, and admonish us; and should
“ esteem them very highly in love for their
“ works’ sake^t.” We are taught also that
“ the elders who rule well should be count-
“ ed worthy of double honour, especially
“ those who labour in the word and doc-
“ trine^u.” These are plain authorities for
the duties which the people owe to their
pastors; and it is not possible to discover
in the New Testament any counteracting
authority, any plausible apology for popu-
lar licentiousness in the dismissal or de-
privation of a pastor. Saint Paul was in-
dignant at the imputation of deriving his
ministry from men^x; and it is his general
exhortation, “ Let a man so account of us,
“ as of the ministers of Christ, and stew-
“ ards of the mysteries of God^y.” He al-
lows that such men should be “ faithful,”
and it is a faithfulness in which no man
can exceed, or of the responsibility of which

^s Heb. xiii. 17. ^t 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. ^u 1 Tim. v. 17.

^x Galat. i. 12. ^y 1 Cor. iv. 1.

he can entertain too deep a sense. The Apostle however denies the right and competence of the people to judge of that faithfulness: “ With me it is a very small
 “ thing to be judged of you, or of man’s
 “ judgment; yea, I judge not mine own
 “ self: yet am I not hereby justified:
 “ but he that judgeth me is the Lord.
 “ Wherefore judge nothing before the
 “ time, until the Lord come, who both
 “ will bring to light the hidden things of
 “ darkness, and will make manifest the
 “ counsels of the hearts: and then shall
 “ every man have praise of God^y.”

9. The opinions which have been recited concerning the Christian ministry, will leave no room for surprise that Baptism has been defined “ a sprinkling of
 “ water in the name of the Holy Trinity^z :” or that the Baptism of dying children has been called “ a superstition which it is high
 “ time to explode;” a dealing in “ a seeming charm^a.” It is said that there are
 “ irrefragable arguments for considering

^y 1 Cor. iv. 3—5. ^z Christian Observer. ^a Life of a Dissenting Minister, p. 100, 101.

“ Baptism as of temporary obligation and
“ peculiar design;” for restricting it to
“ the apostolic age;” for pronouncing “ its
“ administration at all other times, and in
“ all other circumstances irrelevant
“ and unauthorized;” and for abandoning
“ both infant and adult baptism . . . The
“ first appears to me never to have been
“ instituted, and the last to have been
“ instituted to answer a temporary pur-
“ pose^b.” “ Baptism, according to the
“ views of those who recognize the right of
“ infants to be so brought unto Christ, is
“ not symbolical of initiation into the *visi-*
“ *ble* Church, nor does it constitute the
“ child a member of any Christian society.
“ Into an actual voluntary association, like
“ that of Christian fellowship, no person
“ can be introduced, who is incapable as
“ an infant is of exhibiting the requisite
“ qualifications, and of performing the con-
“ sequent duties^c.” That Baptism “ is in
“ any sense a condition or an instrument of

^b Life of a Dissenting Minister, p. 159. 160. 163. 164.

^c Conder, p. 264. 467.

“salvation, is a notion to be rejected with “abhorrence^d.” Without entering on the controversy concerning Baptismal Regeneration, which the doctrine of the more orthodox Dissenters would require, it may be permitted to allege, in opposition to these sentiments, and in behalf of the perpetuity of Baptism, that the commission which our Lord gave to his Apostles comprehended “all nations” and “every creature” as the objects of Baptism, not less than of preaching the Gospel; and was coextensive with his promise to be with his disciples “always, even unto the end of the “world^e :” and that the entire omission of any restriction of an instituted rite is equivalent to a formal ordinance for perpetuating it. The argument for Infant Baptism rests on the want of a prohibition, which the previous practice of Circumcision rendered necessary, on the universality of the command to baptize all nations^f, and on the actual baptism of whole families^g, in

^d Conder, p. 465. ^e Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15. 16. ^f Matt. xxviii. 19. ^g Acts xvi. 15. 33. 1 Cor. i. 16.

which children are included; and on the reasoning of the Apostle, by which children are represented as “holy,” or not unclean, through the sanctification of their parents^h. The spiritual grace and efficacy of Baptism are asserted in the numerous texts in which it is connected with salvation, remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

10. In the judgment of Nonconformists, Confirmation is a rite “of which there is “no vestige in the history of the primitive “Church, and which is obviously retained “in the Church of England from the “usages of the Church of Romeⁱ.”

11. It is also maintained by Nonconformists, “that the observance of the Lord’s “Supper is a duty, and that as a duty it “ought principally to be regarded^k :” that “its value as a privilege has been exalted “at the expence of its claims to observance “as an obligation^l.” “It was far from “being intended, however, to form a mere

^h 1 Cor. vii. 14.

ⁱ Winter, p. 54. Flower, p. 23.

^k Conder, p. 471.

^l Ibid. p. 472.

“ record ; it was to consist in a remember-
 “ ing also of the event which it represented,
 “ in a solemn personal act of devout re-
 “ membrance ; it was to be an act of faith,
 “ discerning in those sacred symbols the
 “ Lord’s body ; an act, involving at once
 “ the expression of fealty to him as the
 “ Lord, a glorying in his death as the
 “ crucified one, and a believing expecta-
 “ tion of his return^m.” They ask, there-
 fore, “ whether any unintelligible notions
 “ of a sacramental grace, dispensed in the
 “ elements by an apocryphal priesthood,
 “ are necessary to dignify the importance,
 “ or exalt the value of this sacred ordi-
 “ nance ? For Nonconformists, it is enough
 “ to preclude all controversy on the sub-
 “ ject, that the Scriptures contain no reve-
 “ lation as to the existence of any such
 “ grace, no promise as to its bestowment.
 “ Yet do they believe in a *real presence* . . .
 “ and when a Christian Church are as-
 “ sembled together with closed doors, in
 “ the joint participation of this most sacred

^m Conder, p. 478.

“ ordinance, and in the true communion
 “ of saints, at such seasons more espe-
 “ cially they believe, that Jesus the Lord
 “ makes himself known to them in the
 “ breaking of bread. But the fulfilment of
 “ this promise, and the spiritual influxes
 “ of light and joy, which the divine pre-
 “ sence is adapted to impart, they do not
 “ look for at the hands of a priest, nor
 “ even from any efficacy in the emblemsⁿ.”

12. Of the Sacraments generally, it is
 asked, “ Where is the promise, which so
 “ connects the sovereign bestowment of
 “ divine favour with these performances as
 “ to justify the representation, that the rite
 “ of Baptism, or that of the Lord’s Supper,
 “ to say nothing of apocryphal institutions,
 “ was designed to be a visible and certain

ⁿ Conder, p. 480, 481. “ The importance attached
 “ to the character of the administrator, rests on pre-
 “ cisely the same grounds as in the case of conducting
 “ the other public services ; and the office of adminis-
 “ tering is restricted to the pastor, not as invested with
 “ any sacerdotal functions, but simply as a ruler of the
 “ church, upon whom as such devolves the spiritual
 “ cognizance of its members.” Ibid.

“ sign of grace, delivered into our hands
“ as the effect of the ordinance? Is there a
“ single passage of Scripture, is there any
“ thing analogous in the divine proceed-
“ ings, which warrants the presumption?
“ Are spiritual blessings in the New Cove-
“ nant suspended on any other conditions,
“ than the sense of need, and the prayer
“ of faith, or can any thing else be re-
“ garded as the means of obtaining them^o?”
“ Protestants have reason to be jealous of
“ a word, which in the hands of Romanists
“ has wrought so much mischief, the theo-
“ logical character of which is so ambi-
“ guous, and which has still the effect in
“ the minds of many persons of throwing
“ an obscurity around the nature of divine
“ institutions. What Sacraments are or
“ are not, is a point which is hardly worth
“ the pains of determining: for to what
“ purpose is the word restricted in its ap-
“ plication, if the things, which once went
“ by this name, are under any form re-
“ tained^p?”

^o Conder, p. 432.

^p Ibid. p. 437.

We are informed of “ the virtue of dissenting from” the Established Church, “ and of bearing a public and decided testimony to its antichristian spirit and constitution^q.” An attempt has also been recently made “ to convince young persons in Dissenting congregations, that the arguments against lay-conformity are strong and unanswerable^r,” not without expressing “ surprise and concern, that young men of piety and talents, educated among Protestant Dissenters, should at any time find it practicable to become ministers^s” in the Church of England. This attempt arose from observing that “ the Dissenters had greatly lost sight of the genuine reasons of Non-conformity,” . . . and that “ several individuals have allowed themselves to desert the profession of religion, to which they had been habituated from their childhood, and to join the Establishment^t.” The attempt has so far suc-

^q Jones, vol. ii. p. 182. ^r Winter, p. xiii. ^s Ibid. p. xiv. ^t Ibid. p. vii. x.

ceeded, that the Author has “ certain
 “ knowledge, that his publication has al-
 “ ready, to a considerable extent, accom-
 “ plished his design by awakening atten-
 “ tion to the subject, and by fixing the
 “ judgment and the practical decisions of
 “ some, who were halting between two opi-
 “ nions^u.”

These efforts should provoke the emula-
 tion of the Churchman, and let him not
 fear to discuss “ the question of scriptural
 “ precedents, and the authority of the
 “ New Testament^x.” Let him instruct his
 household in such sound principles of an
 apostolical Church as may counteract the
 zeal of seeing children “ enlightened, con-
 “ scientious Dissenters^y.” Let him agree
 with the Dissenter in acknowledging the
 importance of the question, and the duty
 of endeavouring “ to arrive at a settled
 “ judgment as to the laws of Christ in re-
 “ ference to the form and order, and dis-
 “ cipline of his Church^z :” and lastly, let

^u Winter, p. xvii. xviii. ^x Ibid. p. x. ^y Bicheno,
 p. iv. ^z Winter, p. 15.

him agree with him in referring “ the mat-
 “ ter at issue to the determination of the
 “ New Testament^a.” Let him also vie
 with him in the zeal and assiduity with
 which he prosecutes the inquiry and pub-
 lishes the result, and strive to put an end
 to the equivocal insinuation, that “ the
 “ Churchman examines the merits of the
 “ cause, and on conviction becomes a Dis-
 “ senter ; the Dissenter disclaims examina-
 “ tion, and so becomes a Churchman^b.”

The principal questions at issue^c are,
 the right of private judgment ; the autho-
 rity of national Establishments for religion ;
 the nature of Christian unity, and the

^a Winter, p. 25. ^b Ibid. p. 94.

^c “ The principles of Nonconformity, as respects the
 “ constitution of Christian Churches, are briefly these :
 “ the purely voluntary nature of religious union ; the
 “ necessary independence of societies so originating ;
 “ the spirituality of the objects they are exclusively de-
 “ signed to promote ; the moral nature of the authority
 “ to which they are subject, as opposed to all admix-
 “ ture of secular power ; and finally, the unalienable
 “ right vested in every such society, to choose its spi-
 “ ritual pastors and teachers.” Conder, p. 248. see
 also p. 302.

form, order, and authority of the Christian ministry. If the Scriptures recommend unlimited inquiry; if they condemn the alliance of Church with the State; if they justify a diversity of religious profession, an elective ministry, and the independence of voluntary associations, in deference to their authority, it is our duty to become Dissenters: but if they discountenance private imaginations, and demand settled principles of belief; if they require a strict unity of communion; if they sanction the divine institution of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, for the edification of the Church, let us retain our communion with the Church of England, in the assurance, that it rests on an apostolical foundation.

Now may the great Master, who foretold and hath permitted the progress of heresy and offence, grant that we may be “approved” in counteracting and resisting it! May he accelerate the fulfilment of the promise, that we shall all come “in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man,

“ unto the measure of the stature of the
“ fulness of Christ^d!” May he suffer no
competition to arise among his disciples,
but for excellence in love and good works,
and so inspire the hearts of men “ with all
“ lowliness and meekness, with all long-
“ suffering, that forbearing one another in
“ love, we may earnestly endeavour to keep
“ the unity of the Spirit in the bond of
“ peace^e!” May it be the constant, and
may it be the accepted prayer of every
man, that we may be “ filled with the
“ knowledge of his will in all wisdom and
“ spiritual understanding; that we may
“ walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleas-
“ ing, being fruitful in every good work,
“ and increasing in the knowledge of God;
“ strengthened with all might, according to
“ his glorious power, unto all patience
“ and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving
“ thanks unto the Father, which hath made
“ us meet to be partakers of the inheritance
“ of the saints in light : who hath delivered
“ us from the power of darkness, and hath

^d Ephes. iv. 13.

^e Ephes. iv. 2, 3.

“ translated us into the kingdom of his dear
“ Son : in whom we have redemption
“ through his blood, even the forgiveness
“ of sins : who is the image of the invisible
“ God, the firstborn of every creature :
“ for by him were all things created, that
“ are in heaven, and that are in earth, visi-
“ ble and invisible, whether they be thrones,
“ or dominions, or principalities, or pow-
“ ers : all things were created by him, and
“ for him : and by him all things consist :
“ and he is the head of the body, the
“ Church : who is the beginning, the first-
“ born from the dead ; that in all things
“ he might have the preeminence ^f.”

^f Coloss. i. 9—18.

SERMON VI.

THE MANNERS OF THE AGE COMPARED WITH
THE SCRIPTURES.

2 TIM. iii. 4, 5.

*Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;
having a form of godliness, but denying the
power thereof.*

IT requires but a superficial acquaintance with the moral maxims of the Gospel of Christ, and a cursory or casual observation of the manners which have prevailed, and which continue to prevail, in countries professedly Christian, to discover the marked and striking difference between the precepts of the Master and the practice of the disciples. It would seem as if the regulation of the one had been left to the mere discretion of man, without reference to any prescribed rule, and variable in compliance with his pleasures, or in accommodation to

his convenience; and as if the other had been framed for a superior race of beings, who had never been called to act their parts on the theatre of this world.

That Christianity has effected a great and essential alteration in the public manners of nations cannot be denied. Under her genial influence, the amusements of the gay have been humanized, and the studies of the wise have been ennobled; the horrors of war have been mitigated, and charity has been made to flow through a thousand channels to the relief of every description of human wretchedness; the relations of social life have been improved; and the frame of civil society has been adorned and strengthened, and such an equitable government been established between republican anarchy and unlimited despotism, as exceeds the brightest visions of antiquity^a. These are some of the glorious triumphs which Christianity has achieved, which she has achieved

^a *Cunctas nationes et urbes populus aut primates aut singuli regunt; delecta ex his et consociata reipublicæ forma laudari facilius quam evenire, vel si evenit, haud diuturna esse potest. Tacit. Ann. iv. 33.*

by her own single strength, in opposition to the passions and interests, the pride and prejudices, of mankind. The nations of the earth have been instructed and reformed by the voice of her preachers; and, although the age of miracles has ceased, God hath not failed to confirm his word “with signs following;” the signs of virtue, benevolence, and piety. It is only when the mind is employed in considering what passes within itself, and within its own observation, in measuring the contracted circles of domestic life, or examining the varieties of individual character, that the power of Christianity is found to be defective, is found to be not productive of that abundance of fruit, of exquisite appearance, of delicious flavour and nutritious quality, which might be expected from an abstract consideration of the purity of its precepts, and the force of its obligations.

If our religion had been a system of human invention, its authors could not have reflected on its intrinsic excellence, without entertaining the most sanguine anticipations of its entire and unqualified success. He who “knew what was in man,” the strength

of his infirmities as well as of his abilities, and they who were actuated by the Spirit which “searcheth all things,” and seeth from the beginning to the end of time, encouraged no such expectations. The apprehensions which they conceived concerning the latter times and full ages of the Gospel dispensation, and which they delivered with a prophetic spirit, are embodied in the prophecy, which concludes with the words of the text, as the sum and substance of it. “This know also,” saith the Apostle to Timothy, “that in the last
 “ days perilous times shall come. For men
 “ shall be lovers of their own selves, covet-
 “ ous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, dis-
 “ obedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
 “ without natural affection, truce-breakers,
 “ false accusers, incontinent, fierce, de-
 “ spisers of those that are good, traitors,
 “ heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures
 “ more than lovers of God ; having a form
 “ of godliness, but denying the power
 “ thereof^b.”

I. The several terms of this prophecy are

^b 2 Tim. iii. 1 – 5.

worthy of serious consideration; and it is of importance to ascertain whether our lot is not cast in “perilous times,” when the faithful are full of alarm and apprehension of the things that are coming upon the earth, and convinced of the necessity of peculiar care and circumspection, that they may neither offend others, nor be themselves offended. Has not the *love of self* predominated, and engaged men in the pursuit of personal pleasures and personal interests? Is there not a *covetousness* betrayed by too many in the sordid accumulation of the riches of this world, and the appropriation of its honours and emoluments to themselves and their families? Is there not a *boastfulness* and a vehemence in asserting the little praise which has, or has not, been deserved, with an unworthy *pride*, and ambition of distinction? Are there not “*blasphemers*,” calumniating both God and man, and is there not a spirit of *disobedience to parents*, an aversion from their just control and authority, and a desire of premature independence? Are not many “*unthankful*” for favours conferred, and

many also ungracious in the manner of conferring them? Are there not men “*unholy,*” and destitute of genuine piety? And are not the manners of many parents towards their offspring such as imply the *want of natural affection*? Are there not “*truce-breakers,*” men that, on the most frivolous pretences, violate the most solemn engagements, and who are also irreconcilable in the animosities which they indulge? Do not the records of our courts proclaim many “*false accusers,*” and our streets exhibit many “*incontinent*” persons, abandoned to unlawful gratifications? Have the “*ferce*” disappeared, and put on the mildness and gentleness of Christian manners? Or have the “*despisers of those that are good*” laid aside the contemptuous spirit, and delighted to esteem their brethren before themselves? Have no “*traitors*” been found in offices of public or of private trust and confidence; or have no “*heady*” and precipitate men experienced the effects of an unwise and unjust speculation; or no “*highminded*” ones exhibited the fooleries of upstart insolence?

Have not the multitude been “*lovers of pleasures more than of God,*” and put on “*the form of godliness,*” without possessing “*the power thereof?*”

The answer to these questions will determine, how far we are implicated in the prophecy of the Apostle. Without insisting upon its minuter details, or appropriating them all to existing circumstances, it will certainly be admitted, that it is an unwise and undiscerning spirit, which proclaimeth to the world that the times in which we live are times in which the righteous may rejoice, times of self-complacency and mutual congratulation, in which “all good men” hail “the peculiar glories of these latter days,” and the “pledge of brighter hopes in prospect^c.” The several terms of the prophecy may be resolved into self-love, into a love of pleasure and of those things which appear to constitute a man’s happiness in the world, without reference to the love of God; and in immediate connexion with this selfishness is the easy

^c Christian Observer, vol. xv. p. 402.

ostentation of a form of godliness, of such a lifeless, unanimated form as does not consist with the power of it.

By the prophecy, that in the perilous times men shall be “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,” is not meant, that during the continuance of these times there shall be no bright instances of a sincere and earnest devotion of the heart and all its affections, and of the mind and all its faculties to the service of God; that there shall no where be any prevailing attention to the one thing needful; no predominant pursuit of “the kingdom of God and his righteousness;” God, who hath never left himself “without witness” in the works of creation and of providence, hath in every age and in every country had some to worship him in spirit and in truth; some, whose simple faith and uncorrupted manners have glorified their heavenly Father. Neither does the prophecy, that men shall have the form, but deny the power of godliness, imply, that in the ostentation of the former, they shall be entirely destitute of the latter. The prophecy is fulfilled, if in com-

parison and degree only the love of pleasure is made to exceed the love of God, and the due proportion between the form and the power of godliness is destroyed. Under this limitation, the prophecy is applicable to ourselves. In our age and country the love of pleasure is too generally made the constant end and aim of every desire; the unaltered, actuating principle of every action, which employs all our vigour and lessens every fatigue: the love of God is the cold reflection of the moment, when the heart is distracted with care, or exhausted with labour; the rule of deeds in which neither interest nor passion has any concern; the object of a distant hope, which, it is vainly imagined, may be achieved by many a devious and circuitous path. The one is the enthusiastic feeling which absorbs every other consideration; the other, the cold calculating judgment, which weighs occasions, and deliberates upon opportunities. The one occupies the whole man in all times and in all places, and leads him in his very extravagance to act a consistent part; the other is relaxed and

intermitted, regarded to-day, and neglected to-morrow; entertained upon occasion in the closet, but in the public haunts of men, disguised through fear, or counterfeited through ambition.

Such is the love of pleasure, as it acts in opposition to the love of God; and the contrast between the form and the power of godliness is equally visible and distinct. They may unquestionably consist together, as the shadow follows the substance, or as the finished portrait exhibits the beauty of the original. Good and holy men will never be inattentive to those simple forms which are worthy of the power of godliness, which are derived from a divine precept or institution, which have been observed in the best ages of the Church, and of which the rejection would be more offensive to Christian charity, than the maintenance of them can be prejudicial to Christian piety. Such are the most earnest endeavours “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;” the devout sanctification of the seventh day, and the punctual observance of all the negative and positive

duties which it enjoins; the constant celebration of the Supper of the Lord, with serious preparation and self-inspection; and the daily worship of God in the family and in the closet. These are forms which bespeak the power of religion operating in the heart; and which have been recommended by men, who, in their several days, shone "like lights in the world," and adorned "the doctrine of God our Saviour " in all things."

The form of godliness is then only censurable, when it is distinct and separate from the power; when, being designed for the auxiliary, it seeks the principal station in the order of religious duties; when, instead of a humble conformity with a prescribed rule, it betrays itself in the vanity of invention; when it seeks the praise of man without reference to the praise of God. The many forms of pharisaic godliness were not founded in obedience to the strict provisions of the moral or the ritual law, but consisted of a scrupulous tithing of "mint, " and anise, and cummin," when there was neither "justice, nor mercy, nor faithful-

“ness;” of frequent washings of the hands, when there was no purification of the heart, and it was full “of extortion and “excess,” of “hypocrisy and iniquity;” and of praying “at the corners of the streets,” when the destruction of the “widow’s house” was in contemplation. All these things were done “to be seen” and “have glory of “men,” and they obtained the little recompense to which they aspired^d.

The Apostle prophesied that in the Christian Church also, there should be men of the same sort with those whose manners are detailed in the text, whose minds should be “corrupted and without “judgment concerning the faith;” and who should “creep into houses, and lead “captive silly women laden with sins, led “away with divers lusts; ever learning, “and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth^e.” The attempts and the successes of these men were to be worthy of each other; and it does but too plainly appear on the records of ecclesias-

^d Matt. vi. 1. 2. xxii. 14. 23. 25. 28. Mark xii. 38—40. Luke xi. 39—44. ^e 2 Tim. iii. 6—8.

tical history, that in every age in which the form has obtained an undue ascendancy over the power of godliness, men, instead of constantly attending to the indispensable duties of Christian obedience, have been indiscreetly and intemperately zealous and busy in doing what they thought to be good. They have sought distinction by the singularity of their looks and their dress, their words and speeches, their actions and the whole demeanour of their lives; they have been loud and vehement in proclaiming the merit of their little and often false exertions in the supposed cause of religion; they have been fond of public processions and exhibitions, under the name of piety, without a corresponding reverence for the honour of God, or that love which is shewn in a life of uniform obedience to his commandments.

II. And are not these characters, which distinguish the form of godliness, to be seen in this our age of boasted righteousness? There is no stranger in our land who knoweth not that in these last and perilous times, we profess a zeal for godliness,

either in its forms or in its power. Houses of prayer erected in every town, filled with congregations professing all the varieties of religious belief: the organized cooperation of all classes for the purposes of distributing the Scriptures in every language, of promoting education at home and abroad, and of converting the Jew, the Turk, and the heathen; and the zeal and the avidity with which the most flattering reports of all these designs are circulated and received, even in the most sequestered villages, cannot but establish our claim to “the form of godliness.” Without depreciating the value, or denying the efficacy of these popular projects, it may be permitted to doubt, whether there is not in them more of the naked form of godliness, more desire of popular distinction, more of a disorderly zeal, than consists with the simple power of undefiled religion; whether they are not made more subservient to the love of pleasure than to the love of God; and whether they are not, in many instances, conducted by men of little judgment concerning the faith, in cooperation

with women, who would be more suitably occupied in the private devotions of the closet, and in the arrangements of domestic economy.

These doubts are confirmed and strengthened by an accumulation of specific proofs, deduced from official reports, or from daily experience and observation, and relating to the degeneracy of the female character; to the frivolous, luxurious, and expensive habits of domestic life; to the excesses of vicious indulgence; to inhuman practices and exhibitions; to juvenile delinquency, and the progress of crime, which agree in establishing the moral and religious character of the age, that we are “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;” that we have “a form of godliness,” but deny “the power of it.”

1. There is but too powerful proof of the present degeneracy of the female character, from the high standard in which it was wont to be exhibited in this country, and which is described in the Scriptures. The utter frivolity of female education; the uselessness of many female accomplish-

ments; the vanity of modern dress, and the indecent exposure of the person; the easy acquiescence under the high countenance which was given to a dance of foreign origin, than which none was ever more sensual or more lascivious; the confidence with which women are invited, and the facility with which they consent to undertake the superintendence and patronage of works in which they have no concern, and in some of which the disclosures of experienced vice^f cannot but be offensive to female delicacy: these are such transgressions of the power as no forms of godliness can excuse. Such women are very different from those whose characters are delineated in the Proverbs of Solomon, and in the writings of the Apostles. In the language of the latter, they would be described as learning “to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies; speaking things which they ought not:”

^f See Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Police of the Metropolis, for 1817, p. 753.

and they would be recommended to “mar-
 “ ry, to bear children, to guide the house,
 “ and to give no occasion to the adversary
 “ to speak reproachfully^g.” They would
 be exhorted to “ adorn themselves in mo-
 “ dest apparel, with shamefacedness and
 “ sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold,
 “ or pearls, or costly array; but (which be-
 “ cometh women professing godliness) with
 “ good works^h:” and they would be warned
 of the artifices of “ men of corrupt minds,
 “ and without judgment concerning the
 “ faith; who creep into houses, and lead
 “ captive silly women laden with sins, led
 “ away with divers lusts, ever learning, and
 “ never able to come to the knowledge of
 “ the truthⁱ.”

2. Frivolity, dissipation, luxury, and ex-
 travagance, resulting from an excessive
 love of pleasure, may be overlooked among
 the forms of godliness, but they cannot be
 reconciled with that power, which it is
 their natural and immediate tendency to

^g 1 Tim. v. 13, 14. ^h 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. ⁱ 2 Tim. iii.
 6—8.

destroy. An indolent and presuming age, instead of following up the laborious researches of its predecessors, professes a taste for books with an affectation of general knowledge, which are periodically supplied by familiar analyses of new publications in every department of literature, and by compendious treatises of science, from which the merest trifler may obtain proficiency, and be distinguished among his equals. The whole order of learning is inverted; and while there are masters^k, who

^k Advertisements in the style of the following extracts are not unusual: . . . “The superiority of this select establishment consists in its systematic discipline; in the writing of shorthand; in judicial and parliamentary speaking; and in the lectures which are given on law, divinity, logic, rhetoric, natural and moral philosophy.” *Times*, Jan. 13, 1816 . . . “Gentlemen are boarded and instructed in the various branches of classical, mathematical, and commercial education, with monthly lectures in philosophy, chemistry, mechanics, with the use of an extensive apparatus . . . it is presumed the plan of the school is liberal and genteel, calculated to promote with unusual facility the improvement of the pupil, &c.” *Ibid.* Jan. 3, 1817. “The encyclopædia, or universal system of education, which proposes the well-grounded acquire-

profess their ability to teach, what it is not possible that children should learn; it hath also become the fashion of persons in maturer years to listen to lectures, for which they have made no preparation, and from which it is seldom intended, and seldom practicable, that they should receive any ultimate improvement. Romance and fable are employed to give new attraction to the simple narrative of fact, and the falsest and most delusive views of life are circulated in the unnumbered volumes of fictitious history. The theatre, with the impurity which disgraced a former age¹,

“ment of the ancient and principal modern languages,
“and the elements of every branch of literature and
“science, during the years usually spent under tuition,
“pursued at — School, Middlesex, is detailed in
“prospectuses . . . the academy commands a view into
“twelve counties, is large and modern, &c.” Ibid.
July 13, 1818.

¹ The present age has also been disgraced by a regular trade in obscene prints and publications, which were introduced into schools for girls, through the connivance of servants, or gratuitously thrown into carriages at public places. This trade was principally conducted by foreigners, and not less than six hundred agents are supposed to have been concerned in it. Its efforts have

hath thrown aside the manly vigour of sentiment which instructed it, and glares with meretricious ornament, and disgusts every finer feeling by exhausting the strength of childhood, and doing violence to animal instinct; and at the same time, it forbids the entrance of every woman who is jealous of her virtue, her character, or her reputation, by the easy and voluptuous accommodation of the prostitute, whose support is deemed^m essential to the relief of its embarrassments. The opportunities of vice and intrigue, which the masquerade affords, are annually patronized by the higher classes of the community, and, that its corrupting influence may not be restricted, they are accommodated to the convenience of the lowest. The price which a needy foreigner receives for a specified series of

been successfully counteracted by the Society for the Suppression of Vice. See Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Police of the Metropolis for 1817. p. 525. 565. 605. 714. 717. 721.

^m See the Report of Proceedings at a Meeting of the Proprietors of Drury Lane Theatre, in the Times, Sept. 22, 1817.

performances, exceeds the revenue of many an useful institution, and the low state of the Italian opera, which is the result of these exorbitant demands, and to which an importance is attached by no means proportionate to the unnatural, unmeaning, and uninstrucive nature of the entertainment", is suffered to engage the atten-

ⁿ Among the forms which are destitute of the power of godliness, there is no act of more sanctimonious hypocrisy than the practice which obtains at this theatre, of dropping the curtain whenever the performances are prolonged to twelve o'clock on the Saturday night. This practice has been commended for its decency: be it so. In the virtual acknowledgment of the claims of the Sabbath-day, it is singular that no recollection should be had of the servants and the horses that are waiting in the streets, and that the ballet-dancers alone should be entitled to rest, because it is the holy day of the Lord. The day thus begun is consistently spent in vain ostentation, in travelling, in luxury and play, and in every thing which can tend, through the influence of high authority and example, to demoralize the country by profaning the Sabbath. Numerous instances of this violation of the Sabbath among the lower orders in acts of drunkenness, gambling, cruel sports, and the utter neglect of the public worship of God, are recorded in the Police Report for 1816. p. 222. and in that for 1817. p. 527. 553. 547. 565-8. 586.

tion of able and experienced statesmen, while nobles of inferior attainments are content to become the managers and administrators of an ordinary theatre. Amusements, adapted to every period and condition of life, are multiplied in the metropolis and in the provinces: every place affords an asylum in which the gamester may pursue his occupation with impunity; and periodical scenes of the most unrestrained licentiousness are suffered to continue, when there is no pretext of policy for their continuance, and every moral motive to demand their entire and immediate suppression^o.

In the private house, a plain and simple hospitality is superseded by magnificent entertainments, in which the seasons are severally anticipated by artificial produc-

^o "The number of low fairs in the vicinity of London occupy eighty days in the year." Police Report for 1817. p. 564. For the mischievous effects of these public nuisances, see p. 563. 590. 604. 754; Report for 1816. p. 67. 250; Report of the Committee of the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline, and for the Reformation of Juvenile Offenders, p. 15.

tions, and the banquet of a night is made to exhaust the revenues of a year, and to impoverish the inheritance of the children. The vanity of dress gives encouragement to the prohibited introduction of foreign wares, which cannot be accomplished without fraud and without imminent peril, and in the jealousy of one class of the opulent for certain assumed privileges, the tables of another are incompletely furnished, unless there be an indirect connivance in wrong and robbery, and even upon occasion in manslaughter^p. This domestic luxury com-

^p “ It was impossible for gentlemen to disguise from
“ themselves, that the present Game Laws were an in-
“ tolerable nuisance. That the increase of poaching
“ had been their only effect, he held in his hand some
“ returns, which, if the House would permit him to read
“ them, would strongly demonstrate. They were returns
“ of the number of committals in Bedford, . . . for
“ offences against the Game Laws during the last ten
“ years. In 1809 there were four; in 1810, two; in
“ 1811, fourteen; in 1812, five; in 1813, five; in 1814,
“ thirteen; in 1815, twenty-four; in 1816, thirty-three;
“ in 1817, sixty-one; in 1818, eighty. He particularly
“ called the attention of the House to the growing and
“ enormous increase of the last four years.” Speech of
the Marquis of Tavistock, on the Game Laws’ Amend-
ment Bill. May 14, 1819.

mands a retinue of pampered menials, corrupted and corrupting each other, new and expensive equipages, the arrangements of splendid furniture, and various articles of personal expense, which consume the treasures of the most wealthy, and leave no funds for the exercise of private liberality, even if there were leisure for compassionate reflection on the mass of private necessity. This luxury and its fatal consequences are not confined to any particular class of the community. In the lowest rank it betrays itself in unbecoming apparel, and in the fatal and demoralizing use of ardent spirits⁹,

⁹ From an official document included in the Police Report for 1817. p. 454. it appears, that the duty paid upon British spirits *alone*, between the years 1803 and 1816, both inclusive, amounted to 29,738,068*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.* The duty of the last seven years exceeds that of the preceding seven years by 4,411,968*l.* 2*s.* 9½*d.* and the duty of the year 1816, that of the year 1803, by 709,486*l.* 6*s.* 4½*d.* This is sufficient proof of the increased consumption of spirits, notwithstanding the flattering reports of increased sobriety, of which the *appearance* may be easily accounted for. For the effects of drinking spirits in a moral view, see Police Report for 1817. p. 506—514. 516—523; see p. 517. 532, 533. 547. for its effects upon

and terminates in the abject dependence of pauperism; in the middle rank, it seeks a profuse establishment, and tends to bankruptcy; in the highest, it is pampered with foreign indulgences, and brings on such embarrassments as render the peer a pensioner on his dependents. The flagitious accumulations of debt, and the shamelessness of insolvency^r, are such as convey a strong reflection on the character of a Christian nation. The extravagant of the fraudulent debtor is too often tempted by the easy credulity of a designing creditor, while

the parochial assessment, of which, in two very populous districts of the metropolis, it is supposed, by very competent witnesses, that “full one third,” or “the larger proportion is spent at the gin-shop.”

1 “During the first three years of the Act, that was
“down to March 8, 1815. the debts amounted to
“6,000,000*l.* and the dividends to one farthing in the
“pound. It was then supposed, that this was through
“the carelessness of creditors themselves, and the law
“was amended to meet the evil: but from March 8,
“1815. to March 1, 1817. the number of debtors was
“9000, and the amount of debts nearly 9,000,000*l.*
“He had stated the dividend to be in the former case
“one farthing: he ought to have stated it the quarter of
“a farthing. The effect then of the amendment was,

the trader, with a capital which is entirely nominal, or which bears no conceivable proportion to the extent of his speculations^s,

“that it raised this dividend to a halfpenny.” Mr. Waithman’s Speech, Feb. 1, 1819. in moving for accounts relating to the insolvent debtors’ court, from which it appears, that “the number of insolvents’ estates, which the provisional assignee has assigned in each year since the commencement of the Act to assignees, appointed by the court for the relief of insolvent debtors” was,

In the year 1814 . . .	63
1815 . . .	71
1816 . . .	242
1817 . . .	296
1818 . . .	346

Total 1018

^s “There is a another species of fraud carried on at this time to a great extent, and to the very material injury of tradesmen, which is what is called swindling, practised by men by combining and confederating together; one plays the clerk, another the principal; one day he is a master, the next he is a servant; he is a trader one day, a merchant the next; and by thus appearing under every species of disguise, they obtain goods from tradesmen to a very distressing amount, especially from young tradesmen, who are naturally very anxious to do business: they are in crowds, and there being actually no false pretence, the

adventures the fair fame of mercantile integrity on the distant chance of personal aggrandizement, and in his eventual failure experiences no distress, and merits no compassion; while the occurrence is too common to excite condemnation or surprise.

Hath the age or country in which these things are practised the form or the power of godliness? a love of pleasure, or a love of God? They, who in old time delivered the precepts, and exhibited the practice of true religion, would have admonished the age which concurred in these things, that “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are not of the Father, but of the world^t.” They would with tears of sorrow and of shame have denounced the victims and the patrons of these vanities as “enemies of the cross of

“magistrate cannot—do any thing with them, till there is an indictment found for a conspiracy.” Police Report for 1817. p. 736. Add to this, the iniquity of what are called “mock auctions,” and the whole system of dealing upon bills of credit and fictitious capital.

^t 1 John ii. 16.

“ Christ, whose end is destruction, whose
“ belly is their God, and whose glory is
“ in their shame, and who mind earthly
“ things^u.” They would have charged them
to “ walk circumspectly, not as fools, but
“ as wise, redeeming the time, because the
“ days are evil^x.” They would have taught
us to make our “ moderation known unto
“ all men^y,” and to “ owe no man any
“ thing, but to love one another^z.” They
would have charged “ them who are rich in
“ this world, not to be highminded, nor to
“ trust in uncertain riches^a.” While they
approved a liberal hospitality, and generous
entertainment of strangers, they would have
recommended to our attention the poor and
destitute, who can make no return^b. They
would have proscribed all the idle words
and evil communications which corrupt
good manners, and have recommended the
discourse “ which is good to the use of
“ edifying, that it may minister grace unto
“ the hearers^c ;” and instead of frivolity

^u Philip. iii. 18, 19. ^x Ephes. v. 15, 16. ^y Philip. iv. 5.
^z Rom. xiii. 8. ^a 1 Tim. vi. 17. ^b Heb. xii. 2. Luke xiv,
12. ^c Ephes. iv. 29.

and dissipation, they would have instructed us to be “not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord^d.”

3. Incontinence is a special character of the perilous times; and it is an occasion of mortifying reflection, that in a country which certainly yields to none in its pretensions to moral character, prostitution^e should not only be of wide extent, but more disorderly in its habits, more gross in its expedients, more public and unreserved in its daily communications, and more familiar in intruding itself into places of general resort, than in any other country which professes to be Christian. Unlawful cohabitation is common in all our towns; and the marriages of the village are too often little more than a compromise between the hope of concealing the shame of mutual seduction, and the fear of incurring the pains and penalties of the law; while those of inconsiderate youth in better cir-

^d Rom. xii. 11. ^e See Police Report for 1816. p. 67. 28. 342. and that for 1817. p. 685—690. 693. 774. There is no variation in the reports of the increased number and of the increased profligacy of prostitutes.

cumstances, after being solemnized according to the forms of the Church, are liable to be dissolved, on the confession of perjury and fraud; and thus the distinction is made to cease between concubinage and matrimony, between legitimacy and bastardy; and the only attempt which it has been thought prudent to make, in control of this complication of crime and misery, seeks no more than to restrain the facilities of committing the offence, and to limit the period within which the marriage vow shall be insecure. There have been also too many instances of adultery, highly aggravated by the relation of the adulterer and the adulteress, by the violation of mutual friendship, by the abandonment of numerous families, and by the humiliation of highly honourable and virtuous parents. Even the vices which desolated the Cities of the Plain have been perpetrated with alarming frequency. Let no forms of godliness impose upon an unthinking age, oppressed by the weight of sensual impurity. Though vice may be made an occasion of unfeeling ridicule, let not the recorded proscription be forgotten: "Neither fornicators, nor idol-

“aters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor
“abusers of themselves with mankind, shall
“inherit the kingdom of God^f.”

4. Shall we fly for consolation from these iniquities to the promises of a future generation, and rejoice in the probable advantages of increased education? There has not yet been time for the development of these wholesome projects, of this meditated good. We can only behold in the dwellings of the rich the effects of a vicious or neglected education, of that effeminacy which disapproves of discipline, or that indolence which offers no control, and of which the worthy and natural fruits are pride, confidence, unrestrained and premature independence; extravagance and the beginning of a life of insolvency and anticipated resources; luxury and intemperance which no age can excuse, heightened and aggravated by the childhood of the offender. The consequences of neglecting and deferring the instruction of the poor are seen in the halls of the magistrate, and

^f 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

at the tribunal of the judge, where are continually assembled a horde of youthful delinquents, the willing dupes of practised villainy^g and sensual pollution^h, accused by their parents of guilt and vice which their authority cannot restrainⁱ, or which their example or their avarice and utter want of natural affection hath taught^k, or tempted^l, or constrained them to commit, that they may receive the wages of a son's dishonesty and a daughter's prostitution^m. "All the
 " information, however acquired, unites in
 " demonstrating the lamentable fact, that
 " juvenile delinquency has of late years
 " increased to an unprecedented extent,
 " and is still rapidly and progressively in-
 " creasing; that the crimes committed by
 " the youthful offenders are very often of
 " the worst description; and that an or-
 " ganized system for instruction in vice,

^g See Police Report for 1816. p. 75. 85. 391. and for 1817. p. 500. 590. 636. 643. ^h Ibid. for 1817. p. 642.
ⁱ Ibid. for 1816. p. 130. ^k Ibid. p. 144. ^l Ibid. for 1817. p. 512. 529. ^m Ibid. for 1816. p. 220. for 1817. p. 645. 655. Compare Report of Soc. for Imp. of Prison Discipline, p. 13.

“ and the encouragement of depravity, is
 “ regularly maintainedⁿ.”

This increase of youthful licentiousness may be traced to the prevailing practice of relaxing the bonds of parental authority^o, and leaving young men to the guidance of their own indiscretion and inexperience. The heir of rank and fortune is transferred from the nursery to the preparatory, and from the preparatory, to the public school;

ⁿ Report of Soc. for Imp. of Prison Discipline, p. 11.
 “ By reference to the Criminal Calendar it will appear,
 “ that in the year 1813, one hundred and twenty-three
 “ boys of seventeen years of age, and under, were con-
 “ fined in *Newgate only*: but in 1816, two hundred and
 “ forty-seven such children were found within the walls
 “ of that prison, being just double the number during a
 “ period of three years. In 1817, the list of boys thus
 “ imprisoned amounted to three hundred and fifty-
 “ nine. And when we add to these the numbers con-
 “ fined in the other prisons; those summarily convicted
 “ for petty offences by the magistrates; those tried at the
 “ Clerkenwell, Westminster, and Southwark Sessions;
 “ those who escape detection; and those who through the
 “ lenity of their prosecutors are not brought to trial; the
 “ evil is enormous.” Ibid. note. Police Report for 1816.
 p. 55. and for 1817. p. 498, 499. 636. 734. 797—800.

^o Police Report for 1816. p. 55.

in each of which he forms for himself his habits and principles of conduct, and indulges in expense, without any knowledge of the extent of his inheritance. The sons of trade and commerce are no more permitted to dwell^p under the roof of a master, whose frugal habits might present an instructive example, whose authority might restrain, and whose experienced wisdom might improve them; but they are abandoned, in the most critical period of life, to choose their own residence, to seek their own company, in the hours and places most pregnant with temptation, and to appropriate their time without fear of reproof or inconvenience. The children of the peasant and the mechanic can no sooner earn their bread, than they also are their own independent masters, and claim to themselves the privilege of spending the fruits of their industry in vanity or in vice. These are the effects of an unfeeling luxury spreading through all classes, and they are the overflowing sources of juvenile delin-

^p Police Report for 1816. p. 330. 390.

quency, which it requires no common vigour to oppose. The knowledge of these facts may justify the complaint of a “dis-
 “obedience to parents” on the one hand, and of a “want of natural affection” on the other. Surely, if this age and nation was possessed of “the power” of godliness, rather than its “form,” of the love of God more than of pleasure, young men would be more “soberminded^q,” and more scrupulous in avoiding “youthful lusts^r;” fathers would not “provoke their children “to wrath^s,” nor compel them to acts of iniquity; and children trained “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord^t,” and taught to “shew piety at home^u,” would be less “headstrong,” and more obedient to their parents in all things.

5. All acts of fierceness and of cruelty are inconsistent with the mild spirit of Christianity: and what is the humanity which forces the beast at a venture to undertake a task beyond his strength, and

^q Titus ii. 6. ^r 2 Tim. ii. 22. ^s Ephes. vi. 4. ^t Ibid.

^u 1 Tim. v. 4.

perish in the attempt? which finds amusement in stimulating the natural fierceness of a bird or a beast^x? which speculates on the perseverance of the pedestrian in overcoming the calls of nature, or engages the bruiser to fight his brother, and hails with the name of a conqueror a man whose only merit is, that he has disfigured, it may be has destroyed, his brother, and pledged himself upon the awful chances of being a hireling homicide^y? Where again, in the mitigated discipline of other armies, is the humanity of the military judge, when he orders the flesh to be torn from the back of his fellow-man by a sentence which exceeds the known powers of human suffering, as is attested in the mockery of medical attendance to prescribe how far the infliction shall extend; and when he imprints an indelible mark on the person of the criminal, in violation or disregard of the divine precept, which fixed the measure of punishment, on the benevolent principle, that a

^x Police Report for 1816. p. 222. 246. 275. for 1817. p. 563. 603. ^y Ibid. for 1817. p. 590.

man might not “seem vile^z” unto his brother? Where is the humanity of the duelist, when he demands the life of another, and proposes the conditions on which others shall concur with him in deliberately seeking the life of a man? How shall this slave of a false honour escape the imputation of being not only “proud, fierce, heady, high-minded,” but of being a “truce-breaker^a,” even in its strictest sense, when under an obligation to keep the peace at home he carries his resentments to a foreign country? and of being a murderer also, unless some sophistry can confound with a casual and accidental homicide the premeditated use of fatal weapons, carried for the purpose to an appointed place at an appointed time? And lastly, where is the humanity of

^z Deut. xxv. 3.

^a Ασπονδος dicitur non solum qui datam fidem fallit, et inita fœdera frangit, sed etiam qui implacabili adversus alios odio fervet, et quasi nullas σπονδας admittit, implacabilis, irreconciliabilis. Hesyeh. ασπονδοι· αγριοι, εχθροι και μη μνημονευοντες φιλιας η διαθεσεως, αδιαλλακτοι.—ασπονδει· ουκ ειρηγυει. Alberti Gloss. N. T. p. 94. ασπονδους· παραβαινοντας την μεθ' ὀρκωμωσιας ασφαλειαν. Schleusneri Lexicon.

those, who step forwards as the advocates and apologists of all these sanguinary proceedings, who charge with faction the censure of the military executions, who uphold the honour of the duellist in all its fooleries, and recommend the games of blood as a preservative of high and honourable spirit? Let not the forms of godliness deceive the nation, which allows these outrages on humanity, and overlooks the benevolent maxims of the Scriptures: "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast^b." To the Christian belong "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye^c." "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger,

^b Proverbs xii. 10.

^c Coloss. iii. 12, 13.

“ feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink : for
“ in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire
“ on his head. Be not overcome of evil,
“ but overcome evil with good^d.”

6. In the room of this Christian forbearance and forgiveness has gone forth a spirit of litigation, which admits not of friendly interference or mediation, and which has multiplied the courts, and increased the labours of those, who administer the civil jurisprudence of the country. There are but too many provisions of our laws in direct opposition to the requirements of our religion. Oaths which should never be admitted but with the utmost solemnity, and on the most important matters, are multiplied to excess, and administered with levity^e on the most frivolous occasions. The levity of the administration is only exceeded by the facility of the violation, when, under the insidious pretext of mitigating the severity of the law, and of forming a compromise, as it were, between veracity and compassion, a verdict is pronounced in

^d Romans xii. 18—21. ^e Police Report for 1817.
p. 591.

complete contradiction to the evidence. It is also “ to be regretted, that oaths are so
 “ generally required in matters relating to
 “ the revenue. In numerous cases, perhaps
 “ it may be said in general cases, the par-
 “ ties hardly know, except as they are in-
 “ formed by others, what it is to which
 “ they depose ; and whilst an oath serves as
 “ a cover to the proceedings of parties,
 “ who are regardless of its solemnities, it is
 “ often the subject of the most painful
 “ feelings to conscientious men^f.” Crimes

^f Report of the Committee of Ship Owners, dated London, Sept. 24, 1818. “ Although there is no doubt
 “ that clandestine importation is the main channel
 “ through which the traffic is carried on, yet the form of
 “ an oath for the purpose of rendering melted coin le-
 “ gally exportable, is too well known to be a slight ob-
 “ stacle, an obstacle reducible like all other matters in
 “ trade to an average expressed in money.” Letter to Mr. Peel, p. 48. “ He could wish also to say something on
 “ the proceedings at Guildhall, and the scenes of per-
 “ jury which so frequently occurred there. It had been
 “ proved by the evidence of Mr. Montague, Mr. Courte-
 “ nay, and . . . men whose evidence was deserving of
 “ the utmost consideration, because they were not only
 “ employed as commissioners to decide on, but also as
 “ barristers to oppose the claims of different creditors,

of the deepest die are held to be venial, or are expiated with a pecuniary fine, and impunity is provided for the adulterer and the duellist, of whom the former would have been stoned to death under the Mosaic law, and the latter was condemned as an outlaw even before the flood. While these offences are overlooked, on others of a less heinous nature the highest sentence of the law is nominally pronounced, and it is a singular policy^s by which the criminal is

“ that perjury was there reduced to such a system, as no
 “ honest man could think of without shuddering. Mr.
 “ Montague had said, that on those days, when nume-
 “ rous meetings of creditors were expected, individuals
 “ plied at the hall door to be hired to perjure themselves
 “ in the proof of fictitious debts, and that these indivi-
 “ duals were afterwards employed to sign the bankrupt’s
 “ certificate, just as if they had been bonâ fide creditors.
 “ This system was also mentioned by other witnesses,
 “ and a respectable solicitor had even gone so far as to
 “ assert, that there was a regular house in Doctors Com-
 “ mons, where men might at any hour be met ready to
 “ prove debts for a certain per centage.” Speech of Mr.
 J. Smith, on moving the second reading of the Bankrupt
 Laws’ Amcndment Bill, April 2, 1819. See also the
 evidence on Election Petitions from Barnstaple and
 other places. § Police Report for 1816. p. 88. for 1817.
 p. 471. 531. 773. 642. 652.

suffered to run the career of crime, and to frequent its known retreats^h, not without detection, but without apprehension, till he incurs the last severity of punishment. It is also a serious question, which hath of late been agitated, whether the frequency of capital punishment, of which the increase however bears no proportionⁱ to the increase of crime, which in the law received by Noah is restricted to the sin of murder; and which the Mosaic code extends with singular forbearance and moderation, can be justified in principle. In practice it hath evidently lost its effect, making no other impression on the spectator than to excite compassion for the criminal, and leaving little power of discretion between the indiscriminate pardon and the indiscriminate massacre of the guilty.

7. That for a series of several years^k, the

^h Technically called "Flash-houses." See Police Reports *passim*. ⁱ See the annexed Tables: Police Report for 1816. p. 210. 213. 256. ^k See the annexed Tables, which are compiled from the returns laid before Parliament: the first shewing the increase of crimes within the last fourteen years; the second the nature of the crimes committed in the last nine years.

A STATEMENT of the NUMBER of PERSONS charged with CRIMINAL OFFENCES, who were committed to the different Gaols in England and Wales, for Trial at the Assizes and Sessions held for the several Counties, Cities, Towns, and Liberties therein, from the Year 1805 to the Year 1818, both inclusive; distinguishing the Number in each Year, the Number CONVICTED, ACQUITTED, against whom No BILLS were found, and who were not Prosecuted, and the Nature of the Crimes respectively of which they were convicted, &c. from the Year 1810 to the Year 1818, both inclusive; together with the SENTENCES of those CONVICTED, and the Number EXECUTED.

Whitehall, Home Department, 19th Feb. 1819.

NUMBER of PERSONS CONVICTED, SENTENCED, &c. &c.														
In the Years Committed for Trial	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818
Viz. Males	3267	3120	3159	3332	3776	3733	3969	4891	5433	4226	6036	7347	1175*	11335
Females	1338	1226	1297	1403	1534	1413	1478	1685	1731	1564	1782	1744	2171	2232
Total	4605	4346	4456	4735	5310	5146	5337	6576	7164	6390	7818	9091	13932	13567
CONVICTED AND SENTENCED														
To DEATH	350*	325*	343*	338*	392*	476*	404*	532*	713*	558*	553*	890*	1302*	1251*
Transportation for Life	—	—	—	3	7	12	29	25	50	53	3*	60	103	122
for 14 Years	31	26	46	37	50	31	31	67	95	78	91	133	157	236
for 10 Years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
for 7 Years	561	496	500	467	581	526	500	588	622	625	826	861	1474	1692
Imprisonment, and severally to be	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4 Years	1	—	—	1	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	3	1
3 Years	4	4	5	6	—	5	4	5	6	11	7	16	25	7
Whipped, Fined, Pilloried, kept to	124	100	118	99	123	138	111	211	229	177	229	249	238	259
2 Years and above 1 Year	333	294	261	324	365	424	341	492	590	525	666	704	1079	1026
Hard Labour, &c. &c.	1219	1158	1161	1306	1555	1397	1523	1797	1934	1861	2315	2691	1357	4125
1 Year and above 6 Months	156	112	133	131	163	148	147	195	183	137	151	190	420	235
6 Months and under	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whipping, and Fine	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Convicted	2783	2515	2567	2723	3238	3158	3163	3913	4422	4025	4883	5797	9056	8838
Acquitted	1092	1065	1078	1126	1205	1130	1214	1494	1451	1373	1648	1894	2678	2922
No Bills found, and Not Prosecuted	730	766	891	886	897	858	940	1169	1291	992	1247	1110	2198	1987
Total	4605	4346	4456	4735	5310	5146	5337	6576	7164	6390	7818	9091	13932	13567
* Of whom were EXECUTED	66*	57*	63*	39*	60*	67*	45*	82*	120*	70*	57*	95*	115*	97*
Proportion of Capital Convictions to the Number Committed for Trial in each Year,—about	1 in 13	1 in 13	1 in 13	1 in 14	1 in 14	1 in 11	1 in 13	1 in 12	1 in 10	1 in 11	1 in 11	1 in 10	1 in 10	1 in 11
Proportion of Executions to the Number Capitally Convicted in each Year,—about	1 in 5	1 in 5	1 in 5	1 in 8	1 in 6	1 in 7	1 in 9	1 in 6	1 in 6	1 in 8	1 in 9	1 in 9	1 in 11	1 in 12

[To face page 306.]

Nature of Crimes with which the Persons committed for Trial were severally charged in the Years	Total in									Of whom were Convicted in the Years									Convicted in Nine Years	Acquitted in Nine Years	Not Prosecuted, no Bills found in Nine Years	Executed in Nine Years		
	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	Nine Years	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817					1818	
Arson, and other wilful burning of Property	15	12	31	18	24	13	33	30	21	197	1	2	6	6	6	4	8	11	7	51	66	60	26	
Burglary	18	26	27	25	39	32	16	36	29	242	14	15	17	19	24	24	9	25	21	168	37	37	—	
Burglary	157	110	156	287	163	204	350	627	566	2662	88	76	93	165	90	119	216	374	346	1567	701	394	159	
Cattle stealing	17	4	17	16	11	29	30	43	172	14	3	12	10	13	10	14	25	27	127	31	14	2		
Malicious killing and maiming	3	4	7	4	3	4	11	7	6	49	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	—	5	25	19	1	
Child stealing	—	—	—	—	—	5	2	6	2	13	—	—	—	—	—	4	5	1	—	10	4	1	—	
Coins, counterfeiting the Current	8	5	9	29	21	19	26	3	3	125	4	3	4	15	16	9	17	2	—	70	31	24	1	
Putting off and uttering Counterfeit	115	130	198	129	169	223	199	346	321	1890	73	89	131	150	115	167	149	260	239	1402	294	194	—	
Do. having been convicted as Common Utterers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	2	3	4	8	2	—	1	3	—	—	—	1	
Embezzlement by Servants	31	42	44	36	50	51	55	80	60	449	18	21	25	21	31	24	32	34	27	241	146	62	—	
Forgery and Uttering	48	59	69	83	47	52	82	96	173	711	27	26	39	44	29	21	43	62	86	377	107	143	—	
Forged Bank Notes, having in possession	17	20	39	48	39	51	87	124	163	588	16	17	26	47	36	50	80	100	155	531	33	24	—	
Arms-breaking and destroying Machinery	—	—	21	4	—	1	10	8	—	44	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	8	—	30	—	7	—	
Fraudulent Offences	104	92	130	146	102	175	144	249	208	1350	72	55	82	89	71	115	90	162	129	865	266	216	1	
Game Laws, Offences against	—	80	60	68	107	92	91	90	114	164	890	58	56	46	82	66	65	62	75	130	640	157	94	—
Horse stealing	6	5	6	9	—	4	10	22	29	963	47	30	40	60	33	53	77	152	150	642	197	124	—	
Housebreaking in the Day-time and Larceny	3530	3629	4363	4623	4259	5409	6124	8396	9303	50,695	2269	2326	2777	3006	2413	3529	4093	6420	6459	33,692	9128	7865	—	
Arcechy, simple	119	122	128	140	133	160	202	207	217	1428	67	65	69	84	86	86	122	143	142	863	354	210	11	
in Dwelling Houses to the Value of 40s.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27	16	33	34	35	34	36	27	41	263	181	59	—	
in shops, &c. privately to the Value of 5s.	9	8	15	5	11	10	7	9	4	78	5	3	9	4	3	2	4	7	2	39	22	17	7	
on Navigable Rivers to the Value of 40s.	4	2	2	3	3	1	5	2	8	30	4	2	2	3	3	1	5	2	4	26	1	3	—	
of Naval Stores to the Value of 20s.	7	9	4	20	2	—	11	13	5	71	3	6	3	17	2	—	9	11	5	56	6	7	—	
from Bleaching Grounds, &c.	136	194	214	272	311	277	402	519	551	2876	64	85	96	135	167	151	224	257	262	1463	625	798	—	
Letters containing Bank Notes, &c. secreting and stealing	2	4	6	6	2	6	8	3	—	39	2	3	4	3	2	2	4	2	—	22	7	10	2	
— sending threatening	—	—	5	2	1	3	2	1	1	18	1	—	3	2	1	2	1	—	—	10	8	—	—	
Lilid Holbery	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	3	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	2	
Insolvent	59	65	49	55	81	66	64	66	62	574	39	37	24	25	44	31	35	41	39	318	214	42	—	
Murder	64	87	66	87	80	61	85	90	51	661	15	8	19	29	25	15	30	25	13	179	312	170	154	
— shooting, stabbing, and administering Poison with Intent to conceal the Birth of their Infants	26	29	35	18	51	31	63	64	42	361	13	10	8	5	16	8	15	26	6	167	188	66	30	
Bath, unlawful, taking and administering	1	3	7	11	10	—	2	—	—	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	22	49	12	—	
Perjury	7	4	11	9	4	10	5	14	15	79	3	1	2	3	1	5	1	4	1	21	33	25	—	
Prize	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	47	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	4	2	—	4	
Prisoners of War, aiding the Escape of	24	26	29	35	24	35	36	47	23	293	2	5	3	5	5	12	6	6	2	48	103	132	31	
rape, &c.	23	19	22	30	34	42	33	42	27	272	16	15	13	15	17	27	22	25	18	168	34	70	—	
— assault with Intent to commit	—	—	—	14	—	6	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	7	10	3	5	
Hot, and feloniously demolishing Buildings	97	93	157	117	109	128	246	276	222	1445	39	32	65	51	58	43	138	154	107	687	510	248	93	
Tobacco on the Person, on the Highway, and other Places	1	3	4	2	2	2	2	7	9	31	1	2	4	1	1	2	2	3	7	23	5	3	—	
Swearing	82	78	71	125	92	85	125	306	277	1241	39	47	41	82	51	48	79	169	177	733	307	201	31	
Sheep stealing, and killing with Intent to steal	12	12	8	7	7	24	8	8	16	102	5	2	1	2	5	10	2	2	1	30	28	44	18	
Adultery	41	22	37	28	26	15	27	27	23	253	29	15	17	22	14	10	15	10	13	145	37	71	—	
— assault with Intent to commit, and other unnatural Offences	95	106	142	184	141	194	335	336	1724	29	46	63	66	70	82	66	135	126	683	714	327	—		
Stolen Goods, receiving	16	—	13	1	1	—	—	—	—	38	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	32	22	6	
Treason, High	—	7	16	10	9	8	7	7	4	138	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Transports being at Large, &c.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	5	16	10	9	8	5	7	3	77	3	4	—	
Felony and Misdemeanor (not otherwise described)	53	46	152	148	111	167	124	245	163	1209	22	28	71	55	43	96	60	122	70	569	313	327	1	
Total in the Nine Years										75,031										47,375	15,524	12,132	748	
										Committed.										Convicted.	Acquitted.	Not Prosecuted.	Executed.	

number, if not the degree of crimes, hath been, with little intermission, increasing; and that their aggregate amount is now of the most alarming and humiliating nature, are facts which are established on such authentic evidence, as alone might justify the assertion, that as a nation we have not the power of godliness. In this increase are included all those crimes which may be committed by the most inexperienced childhood, and those which cannot be perpetrated without the most consummate skill and ingenuity, the most imposing address, the boldest hardihood, and the most unrelenting cruelty. These crimes have been committed by the young and by the old, by men and by women, without any consideration whether the law is lenient in its enactments, or whether it is written with severity, and executed with rigour. In the crowded prisons, some of which, from the want of proper classification and a vigilant superintendence, are organized schools of iniquity¹, the prisoners learn to look at their trial and their punishment with the

¹ Police Report for 1816. p. 38. 76. 112. for 1817. p. 498.

most hardened indifference and unconcern, and spend, it may be, the last moments of life in projecting new offences^m, in corrupting and hardening the inexperience of youthⁿ, and in the indulgence of the most unrestrained debauchery^o. Murder, in its most aggravated forms, holds a conspicuous rank in the swollen catalogue of crime; and such is often his obduracy, that the murderer, after his conviction upon the clearest evidence, will upon the scaffold persist in denying his guilt; or will invent a plausible tale, and will expire in sullen indifference to the account which he is to render, or with songs of exultation, and all the assumed confidence of a well-founded hope.

8. If the degenerate character of women; if frivolity, dissipation, and extravagance; if the most flagrant incontinence; if excess of juvenile delinquency; if acts of fierceness and cruelty; if wanton perjury, and the spirit of our laws; if the

^m Police Report for 1817. p. 500. 653. 793. ⁿ Ibid. for 1816, p. 322. for 1817. p. 737. ^o Ibid. for 1817. p. 515. 642. 791.

decided increase of offences of the most aggravated nature;—if these things shall be thought not sufficiently authenticated, or incapable of imputing to our national character, that we are “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,” that we have “a form of godliness,” but deny “the power of it,” let other testimonies be alleged, and supply the defective proof of our unworthiness. It is in itself an imputation upon the age, that more or less favourable comparisons are frequently drawn between modern and more ancient manners, as if the rule of Christian obedience and of personal responsibility was of a fluctuating and variable standard; that each and all of the offences which have been noticed have their advocates and apologists; that their guilt is overlooked by the thoughtless, and denied by the perverse; that the attempts to reform it are feebly supported, and peevishly and pertinaciously opposed; and that whatever be the ostensible zeal of associated multitudes, there is a want of personal exertion, of personal influence, and personal example,

together with an impaired sense of personal responsibility. The too frequent consequence of this masked indifference is, that an insidious appeal is addressed to the multitude, and that popular favour is solicited, where private judgment should be convinced. Hence arise secret confederacies of the people; a diffusion of schemes of civil insubordination; combinations for the attainment of supposed rights and interests, which end in the ruin of the projectors, and of those upon whom they depend for employment, and a declining respect for all constituted authorities. The history of pauperism, and of the extreme difficulty of reforming its manifold excesses and abuses, presents many afflicting details of injustice and dishonesty, in the improvident waste of the parochial allowance in one place, and in the necessity of appealing to its aid in another, through the illiberal and oppressive payment, or rather the studied depression of agricultural wages beneath the fair level of a depreciated currency. Nor is it possible to overlook the effects which have resulted to domestic

virtue and happiness, from the destruction of that class of agriculturists, whose habits and manners formed one of the strongest and fairest links of the social chain.

Let it not be said, that the alleged immoralities of the age have grown up in the unprecedented extent of our military exertions; that they have been fostered by the corrupting tendency of military manners; that the cause of domestic virtue has been overlooked in the triumphs of war, and in attention to foreign policy; that the stagnation of trade, which followed the transition to a state of peace, produced a natural but temporary accumulation of moral evil; or that the increase of crime has been in proportion to the facilitated intercourse between the country and a debauched and luxurious metropolis. Such arguments are rather acknowledgments than extenuations of guilt; and before they are allowed, it should be remembered, that these violations of the power of godliness have been introduced, while its forms have been multiplied, and its means, some of which are of unquestionable power and

efficacy, have been invigorated and enlarged. Let this consideration suppress the spirit of self-complacency and premature exultation in successes not achieved; let it persuade the sanguine to acknowledge the existence of crime, and rouse the indolent to reform it; let it admonish men of every rank and condition, of every political party and every religious denomination, to reflect maturely on the wisdom of their several projects, on the policy of reflection and revision, on the propriety of diverting the excesses of useless charity into more profitable channels, and on the necessity of combining their means, and cooperating in their counsels.

There is no want of powerful instruments, if we have but skill and discretion to use them. Domestic manners require our first attention; and he who diligently observes them may, amidst the accumulated objects of censure and regret, discern some motives of secret hope and exultation: and the recent inquiries, reports, and enactments of the legislature, upon various moral questions, may animate, encourage,

and direct the exertions of individuals in the work of reformation. The exercises of the parochial ministry, which is every day acquiring new ascendancy; the sanctification of the Lord's-day, for which provision hath also been made; the general education of the people; the abolition of some of the more prominent evils of pauperism; the encouragement of the poor to depend upon the fruits of their own industry and economy; the wise revision of the criminal law; and an improved system of prison discipline, which seeks, with the punishment of the offence, not the ease, but the reformation of the offender;—are means of moral renovation which promise the best effects, in restraining, at least in one class of the community^p, the progress of vice,

^p These measures are benevolently designed to better the condition and to improve the morals of one class of the community. Whatever be their success, it should be remembered, that national character is not more involved in the vices and the virtues of the poor, than in the practical influence and example of the great; and it is a truth attested by all history, that the excesses and refinements of luxury are the signs of national decay. Now without adverting to any other causes of political

and restoring habits of piety, virtue, and integrity.

apprehension, which will present themselves to those who observe the peculiar signs of the present times, and compare them with the history of the ages that are past, it may be remarked, that all which is comprised in loving pleasure more than God, personal luxury, neglect of the moral education of children, false notions of honour, the spirit of faction and of party, rapacity of office and of pension, the prostitution of public principle, an undisguised indifference to virtue and vice, a profane contempt of every thing serious and of every thing sacred, is exhibited every day with the most unblushing effrontery. Such habits almost justify the jealousy and suspicion which are sometimes entertained of the general education of the people, and the accelerated progress of the public mind. If there be no corresponding exertions on the part of men in high station—and nothing is more calculated to produce and invigorate these exertions than the manly discipline and renovated institutions of the University of Oxford, which may be said to have grown with the growth and strengthened with the strength of the national education—if there be wanting the energies of virtue among the rich and the noble, the instruction of the poor may eventually prove to have been most ill-timed and unseasonable. In the decline of nations, the insubordination of one class has been usually fostered by the enervating vices of another. In Christianity there is no class which hath either privilege to sin or exemption from punishment. Her precept is: “The time is

Still, in the gradual operation of these measures, let an unremitted attention be paid to the rule of the Scriptures, nor let it be imagined that any degree of virtue has been obtained, until the terms of the Apostle's prophecy shall be inverted. The perilous times shall not cease, nor the age of security and peaceful joy succeed, before men shall be generous, disinterested, liberal, modest, diffident, and humble; full of honour to God, and of respect toward each other; of filial piety, and reverence

“ at hand : he that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and
 “ he which is filthy, let him be filthy still ; and he that
 “ is righteous, let him be righteous still ; and he that is
 “ holy, let him be holy still : and behold I come quickly,
 “ and my reward is with me, to give every man accord-
 “ ing as his work shall be !” Although it is righteous-
 ness which “ exalteth a people,” and sin which is their
 weakness and disgrace ; it is not only for the offences of
 the “ poor and the foolish,” for these have their excuse,
 but it is when “ the great men,” who might “ have
 “ known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their
 “ God ;” it is when these have “ altogether broken the
 “ yoke, and burst the bonds,” that the sentence is
 pronounced ; “ Shall I not visit for these things ? and
 “ shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as
 “ this ?”

to parents; gracious and grateful; holy and devout; affectionate; faithful in their engagements, and reconcilable in their animosities; not calumniators or detractors; temperate, gentle, rejoicing in goodness; worthy of all confidence; cautious, discreet, and humble-minded; forsaking the temptations of pleasure from a sense of duty, and exact in the observance of prescribed forms, only as a means of improvement in the power of godliness.

The revival of this pure and undefiled religion is an object which is worthy of the most strenuous and combined exertions, without which it cannot be expected or attained: and let us engage in the attempt under a full persuasion, that he “who converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins^q,” and that they “who turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever^r.” If we fail in the attempt, we shall nevertheless save our own souls; if we succeed,

^q James v. 20.

^r Daniel xii. 3.

we may save our brethren also. The time is not distant, when in a neighbouring nation the general neglect of the power of godliness was punished by a contemptuous rejection of all its forms, and by a deluge of civil anarchy and religious unbelief, which swept the nations of the earth. If in that momentous crisis we have been preserved a peculiar people, may we, in the conclusion of the storm, pause, and reflect on the casual injuries which we have received; on the convulsive shock which has shaken our faith, our principles, and our practice. May He, “without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy,” enable us to strengthen what has been weakened, and to purify what has been corrupted! May the God of love and peace consolidate all our efforts, and instruct every man in this remaining hour of improvement and renovation, to exercise his zeal in personal repentance, and in provoking others to a holy competition for excellence in love and good works! May it be granted to us, in this day of comparative ease and security, by public and by private exertions, to re-

deem the evils of “the day of wrath, re-
“ buke, and blasphemy.” It is the perilous,
it may be the last, time in which we are
permitted to labour in retrieving our na-
tional character; and may God, who hath
said, that “without holiness no man shall
“ see him^s,” and that “he who doeth
“ righteousness is righteous^t,” so prosper all
our endeavours and designs, as to put away
from us the imputation of being “lovers of
“ pleasures more than lovers of God,” of
having “the form of godliness, but deny-
“ ing the power of it!” May he make us
to act in the sight of all nations, and more
especially in his judgment, as becometh a
wise and faithful, a moral and religious
people, as a people whose Christian prac-
tices are worthy of their Christian profes-
sion and belief!

^s Heb. xii. 14.

^t 1 John iii. 7.

SERMON VII.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
COMPARED WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

1 THESS. v. 21.

Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.

THE good fight of faith has been fought; and it is time for the Christian soldier to retire within his own intrenchments, and rest in peace and security. Covered with “ the shield of faith, with which he is able “ to quench the fiery darts of the wicked “ one,” and armed with “ the sword of the “ Spirit, which is the word of God,” he has penetrated the camp of the several enemies, that have come up against the city of God. Moving under banners, on which is inscribed, the *integrity of human nature, and the simple humanity of Jesus Christ*, the boldest of the hostile party

have been seen threatening its destruction, and hurling the pernicious weapons of heresy and false philosophy. In the opposite quarters, with a motto of *the irrelative sovereignty of God, and the defectibility of the human will*, have been discovered the ambushes of those who would ensnare, to a perverted and misinterpreted faith, the melancholy, the timid, and the undiscerning. Here, in the brilliant armour of *superstition*, and under the guidance of an *infallible* leader, are marshalled in a compact body the slaves and champions of *unwritten tradition*; and there, distracted and in disorder, with no common principles of union, are scattered those whose escutcheon is marked with *the right of private judgment, and unlimited inquiry in matters of religion*. On every quarter of the field, both within and without the city, may be seen too many, abandoned to “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;” professing a zeal for the “form of godliness,” and practically indifferent to its “power.”

Thus distinct are the habits of the

enemy ; thus opposite their modes of warfare ; and it would be natural to suppose, that confederacies formed of such discordant materials, and contending for such different objects, must be weak and of short duration, and liable to be dissolved by the recurrence of jealousy as to the future division of the spoil, of mistrust and suspicion in the hour of trial. Strange it is that the evil spirit of hostility should hold men together, that it should prevent them from resting upon neutral ground, and from seeking a reunion with those, with whom they severally agree in many common principles, and whose destruction can only lead to their more violent collision with each other. The master spirit of delusion and false liberality may discern equal virtues in each of these various masses of enmity, and proclaim the equal usefulness of all, in keeping alive the energies of each other : and while we have been watching on the tower, or holding parley with the enemy, we have seen but too many deserting to his ranks, attracted by his boasts and promises of success, and

inflaming his confidence with the report of our weakness and instability.

It is certain, that as it rests on a divine foundation, our English Church cannot be shaken by the power of man; as far as it is a human establishment, it may be abandoned and stripped of the protection of the State; it may be weakened by the divisions, and betrayed by the indiscretions of its friends; it may be desolated and laid prostrate before its enemies. It cannot be, but that its safety is endangered by the efforts both of secret and of avowed hostility; by the indifference and false security which prevail within; and by the measures of vigorous opposition which are prosecuted from without. The exigencies of the times require unceasing vigilance, unremitting exertion, and zeal tempered with sound judgment and discretion. Let these be exerted by every man in his proper vocation and ministry, and our citadel may bid defiance to all its adversaries. Let individuals of every class be earnest in professing the truth; united in Christian love, and constant in worshipping God in the beauty

of holiness. Let the ministers of Christ strive together for the truth of the Gospel; let them execute their office with zeal, and the affectionate concern of those who are sensible that they “watch for souls,” and “must render the account;” and whose ambition has a higher object than the largest accumulation of the honours and advantages of this world. Let the governors and the patrons of the Church be scrupulous in the selection of pastors for the sheep, with such remembrance of their deep responsibility, as shall counteract the claims of nepotism and secular interest. Let the Christian legislature from time to time supply such measures as shall be necessary to promote the due edification of the people, and to secure an adequate remuneration to all the Clergy:—let these things be done, and our English Church may again be combined, and consolidated, and enlarged. If the times in which we live abound in motives of fear, there are also promises of hope and consolation. The poverty of the Church has been abated; our houses of prayer have been

multiplied; associations have been instituted, or enlarged, for the promotion of Christian knowledge, and for impressing on the minds of youth the principles of true religion; a spirit of religious inquiry has been awakened, and whatever may be the excesses of evil report, there remaineth much good report to many who maintain the truth. Our lot is thrown in times, in which, if we be watchful, success will reward our vigilance; if we be indolent, the triumph of the adversary is certain and complete.

The spirits that are in the world have been tried, and found to be wanting; the spirit of our own Church, exhibited in her articles of faith, in her rules of Christian virtue, in her constitution, and forms of religious service, remain to be tried by the same standard of the Scriptures, which alone can determine whether they are worthy to be held fast.

I. The faith of the Church of England, as expressed in the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, is collected from scriptural authority. It is maintained, that “ holy

“ Scripture containeth all things necessary
“ to salvation, so that whatsoever is not
“ read therein, nor may be proved thereby,
“ is not to be required of any man, that it
“ should be believed as an article of the
“ faith, or be thought requisite or neces-
“ sary to salvation^a.” The argument also,
on which it is asserted, that “ the three
“ Creeds . . . ought thoroughly to be re-
“ ceived and believed” is, that “ they may
“ be proved by most certain warrants of
“ holy Scripture^b.” This keystone of Pro-
testantism, which upholds the sufficiency
of the Scriptures without the traditions of
authority, or the inventions of philosophy,
doth itself rest on the true and faithful
sayings, that “ prophecy came not at
“ any time by the will of man, but holy
“ men of God spake as they were moved
“ by the Holy Ghost^c.” These “ holy
“ Scriptures are able to make us wise un-
“ to salvation,” and having been “ given
“ by divine inspiration, they are profitable
“ for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

^a Art. VI.

^b Art. VIII.

^c 2 Pet. i. 21.

“ for instruction in righteousness ; that the
 “ man of God may be perfect, throughly
 “ furnished unto all good works^d.”

The foundation is therefore both sound and sure ; and we may proceed to examine the superstructure, the articles of faith which are built upon it, as they relate to God ; to his “ honourable, true, “ and only Son ;” to “ the Holy Ghost, “ the Comforter ;” to the state of man ; and to the method of our justification.

1. It is a scriptural truth, that “ he that
 “ cometh unto God must believe that he
 “ is^e.” In conformity with this primary truth, our Church professes, that “ there
 “ is but one living and true God, everlast-
 “ ing, without body, parts, or passions ; of
 “ infinite power, wisdom, and goodness ;
 “ the Maker and Preserver of all things
 “ both visible and invisible^f.” This is her interpretation of the voice of Him, who hath said : “ Hear, O Israel, the Lord our
 “ God is one Lord^g ;” the “ I am^h ;”

^d 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. ^e Heb. xi. 6. ^f Art. I.

^g Deut. vi. 4. ^h Exod. iii. 14.

“ the high and lofty One that inhabiteth
 “ eternity ⁱ ;” who is “ the Lord, and there
 “ is none else ^k ;” He is “ a Spirit, ^l” whom
 “ no man hath seen at any time ^m :” of
 whose indivisible and incomprehensible na-
 ture all things are full, whom “ the hea-
 “ ven, and heaven of heavens cannot con-
 “ tain ⁿ .” He is “ high as heaven . . .
 “ deeper than hell . . . longer than the
 “ earth, and broader than the sea ^o ;” the
 Lord, who “ changeth not,” who “ is not
 “ a man that he should lie, nor the son
 “ of man that he should repent ;” and “ in
 “ whom is no variableness, nor shadow of
 “ turning ^p .” His “ invisible” properties,
 “ even his eternal power and godhead, are
 “ clearly seen from the things which are
 “ made ^q ;” for he “ spake and they were
 “ made, he commanded and they were
 “ created ^r .” He is also “ merciful and
 “ gracious, longsuffering, abundant in

ⁱ Isaiah lvii. 15. ^k Isaiah xlv. 18. ^l John iv. 24.

^m John i. 18. ⁿ 1 Kings viii. 27. ^o Job xi. 8, 9.

^p Malachi iii. 6. Numbers xxiii. 19. James i. 17.

^q Rom. i. 20. ^r Psalm xxxiii. 9. cxlviii. 5.

“goodness and truth^s.” “Stand up
 “therefore, and bless the Lord your God
 “for ever and ever; and blessed be thy
 “glorious name, which is exalted above
 “all blessing and all praise. Thou, even
 “thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made
 “heaven, even the heaven of heavens, with
 “all their hosts, the earth, and all things
 “that are therein, the seas, and all that is
 “therein, and thou preservest them all,
 “and the host of heaven worshippeth
 “thee^t.”

2. With a stedfast adherence to the name in which our Lord required his disciples to be baptized, “the name of the
 “Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
 “Ghost^u ;” in devout “acknowledgment
 “of the mystery of God, and of the Fa-
 “ther, and of Christ^x ;” and in hope of receiving “the grace of our Lord Jesus
 “Christ, and the love of God, and the
 “fellowship of the Holy Ghost^y,” our Church proceeds to declare, that “in Unity

^s Exodus xxxiv. 6. ^t Nehemiah ix. 5, 6. ^u Matt. xxviii. 19. ^x Col. ii. 2. ^y 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

“ of this Godhead, there be three Per-
 “ sons of one substance, power, and eter-
 “ nity ; the Father, the Son, and the Holy
 “ Ghost^z.” She professes it as a neces-
 sary article of the Catholic faith, “ that we
 “ worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity
 “ in Unity^a :” she prays, that the “ Al-
 “ mighty and everlasting God, who *has*
 “ given unto *his* servants grace, by the
 “ confession of a true faith, to acknow-
 “ ledge the glory of the eternal Trinity,
 “ and in the power of the Divine Majesty
 “ to worship the Unity, *may* keep us sted-
 “ fast in this faith^b ;” and it is her con-
 fession, that there is “ one God, one Lord,
 “ not only one Person, but three Persons in
 “ one Substance ; for that which we be-
 “ lieve of the glory of the Father, the
 “ same we believe of the Son, and of the
 “ Holy Ghost, without any difference or
 “ inequality^c.” It is therefore one of her
 doxologies, that “ thou only, O Christ, with
 “ the Holy Ghost, art most high in the
 “ glory of God the Father^d.”

^z Art. I. ^a Athanasian Creed. ^b Collect for Trinity
 Sunday. ^c Communion Office. ^d Ibid.

3. Instructed by our Saviour himself to believe in him, even as we believe in God^e, and “ that all men honour the Son, even “ as they honour the Father^f ;” and knowing also, that the great mystery of godliness is the manifestation of God in the flesh^g, our Church professes this belief concerning “ the Word, or Son of God, which “ was made very man. The Son which is “ the Word of the Father, begotten from “ everlasting of the Father; the very and “ eternal God, and of one Substance with “ the Father, took man’s nature in the “ womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect “ natures, that is to say, the Godhead and “ Manhood, were joined together in one “ Person, whereof is one Christ, very God, “ and very man^h.” She thus believes “ in “ one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light “ of Light, very God of very God, be-

^e John xiv. 1. ^f John v. 23. ^g 1 Tim. iii. 16.

^h Art. II.

“ gotten, not made, being of one sub-
“ stance with the Father, by whom all
“ things were made : who for us men, and
“ for our salvation came down from heaven,
“ and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
“ of the Virgin Mary, and was made
“ mani.” In the words of another Creed,
she asserts, that “ the right faith is, that
“ we believe and confess, that our Lord
“ Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God
“ and Man ; God, of the Substance of the
“ Father, begotten before the worlds ; and
“ Man, of the Substance of his Mother,
“ born in the world ; perfect God, and
“ perfect Man : of a reasonable soul and
“ human flesh subsisting ; equal to the
“ Father, as touching his Godhead ; but
“ inferior to the Father, as touching his
“ Manhood. Who although he be God
“ and Man, yet he is not two, but one
“ Christ ; One ; not by conversion of the
“ Godhead into flesh : but by taking of
“ the Manhood into God ; One altoge-
“ ther ; not by confusion of Substance ;

i Nicene Creed.

“ but by unity of Person^k.” In her own more simple words, our Church rejoices that God did give “ Jesus Christ *his* only “ Son to be born . . . for us ; who, by the “ operation of the Holy Ghost, was made “ very man of the substance of the Virgin “ Mary his mother ; and that without spot “ of sin, to make us clean from all sin^l ;” that God gave his “ only-begotten Son to “ take our nature upon him, and to be “ born of a pure Virgin^m.”

These expressions involve the doctrines of the Divinity and Incarnation of Christ, which are sufficiently attested in the following Scriptures, and without the admission of which, the sacred Volume cannot be reconciled or interpreted consistently with itself. “ In the beginning was the “ Word, and the Word was with God, “ and was Godⁿ ;” “ the true God^o,” even “ God blessed for ever^p.” This “ Word was made flesh, and dwelt among “ us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory

^k The Creed of St. Athanasius. ^l Communion Office. ^m Collect for Christmas Day. ⁿ John i. 1.
^o 1 John v. 20. ^p Romans ix. 5.

“ of the only-begotten of the Father^q;) when “ in the fulness of the time God sent “ forth his Son, made of a woman^r,” and “ in the likeness of men^s; and “ forasmuch “ as the children are partakers of flesh and “ blood, he also himself likewise took part “ of the same^t.” When the plain import of these and the many parallel texts can be set aside, the faith which the Church of England maintains concerning the Son of God may be rejected as unscriptural and unauthorized.

4. He “ truly suffered, was crucified, “ dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father “ to us, and to be a sacrifice not only for “ original guilt, but also for actual sins of “ men^u.” “ He came to be the Lamb without spot, who by sacrifice of himself once “ made should take away the sins of the “ world; and sin,” as St. John saith, “ was “ not in him^v.” “ He is the very Paschal “ Lamb, which was offered for us, and hath “ taken away the sin of the world, who by

^q 1 John 1. 14. ^r Gal. iv. 4. ^s Philip. ii. 7. ^t Heb. ii. 14. ^u Art. II. ^v Art. XV.

“ his death hath destroyed death ^x ;” “ who
 “ did humble himself even to the death
 “ upon the cross for us miserable sinners,
 “ . . . that he might make us the children
 “ of God, and exalt us to everlasting life ^y ,”
 and “ made there, by his one oblation of
 “ himself once offered, a full, perfect, and
 “ sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satis-
 “ faction for the sins of the whole world ^z .”
 Thus it is written that “ God made him,
 “ who knew no sin, to be a sin offering for
 “ us ^a ;” “ Christ our Passover was sacri-
 “ ficed for us ^b ,” “ even “ the Lamb with-
 “ out blemish and without spot ^c ,” that
 “ taketh away the sins of the world ^d .” He
 “ became obedient unto death, the death
 “ even of the cross ^e ,” and in him God was
 “ reconciling the world unto himself ^f ,” and
 “ he is the propitiation for our sins ^g .” “ We
 “ are sanctified through the offering of the
 “ body of Jesus Christ once for all, . . . for
 “ by one offering he hath perfected for ever
 “ them that are sanctified ^h .”

x Communion Office. y Ibid. z Ibid. a 2 Cor. v. 21.
 b 1 Cor. v. 7. c 1 Pet. i. 19. d John i. 29. e Philip.
 ii. 8. f 2 Cor. v. 19. g 1 John. ii. 2. h Heb. x. 10. 14.

5. “As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also it is to be believed, that he “went down into hellⁱ.” for according to the prophecy, and the Apostle’s interpretation of it, his soul was not left in hell, nor was his Holy One suffered to see corruption^k.

6. “Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things pertaining to the perfection of man’s nature, where with he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth, until he return to judge all men at the last day^l.” He “after his most glorious resurrection manifestly appeared to all his Apostles, and in their sight ascended up into heaven, to prepare a place for us, that where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory^m.” It was thus “that he rose again the third day according to the Scripturesⁿ,” and “shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs,

ⁱ Art. III. ^k Psalm xvi. 10. Acts ii. 31. ^l Art. IV.

^m Communion Office. ⁿ 1 Cor. xv. 4.

“ being seen of his Apostles forty days,”
 until the day in which “ he was taken up,
 “ and a cloud received him out of their
 “ sight^o.” Exalted “ above all principality,
 “ and power, and might, and dominion^p,”
 he sitteth “ at the right hand of the throne
 “ of God^q.” Thither he hath ascended “ to
 “ prepare a place^r” for us, and from thence
 “ we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus
 “ Christ, who shall change our vile body,
 “ that it may be fashioned like unto his
 “ glorious body^s;” and when he shall thus
 “ appear, we also shall appear with him in
 “ glory^t,” and he shall “ be glorified in his
 “ saints, and admired in all them that
 “ believe^u.”

7. “ The Holy Ghost, proceeding from
 “ the Father and the Son, is of one sub-
 “ stance, majesty, and glory with the Father
 “ and the Son, very and eternal God^x.”
 He is “ the Lord and Giver of life, . . . who
 “ with the Father and the Son is worship-

o Acts i. 3. 9. p Ephes. i. 21. q Heb. xii. 2. r John
 xiv. 2, 3. s Philip. iii. 20, 21. t Coloss. iii. 4. u 2 Thess.
 i. 8. 10. x Art. V.

“ped and glorified; who spake by the
 “Prophets^y.” “The Holy Ghost is of the
 “Father and of the Son, neither made, nor
 “created, nor begotten, but proceeding—
 “uncreate, . . . incomprehensible—eternal,
 “Almighty—God, and—Lord^z.” We ac-
 knowledge, that God did “teach the hearts
 “of *his* faithful people, by sending to them
 “the light of *his* Holy Spirit,” and we pray,
 that we “by the same Spirit may have a
 “right judgment in all things, and ever-
 “more rejoice in his holy comfort^a.”

These professions of faith, and the pro-
 perties which are attributed to the Holy
 Spirit, may be justified on Scriptural argu-
 ments and authorities. He is called Lord
 and God, both directly^b and indirectly^c by
 the Apostle. He is “eternal^d,” and there-
 fore uncreate; concerned in the work of
 creation^e, and therefore Almighty; omni-
 present^f, and therefore incomprehensible,
 in the sense in which the word is used by

^y Nicene Creed. ^z Creed of St. Athanasius. ^a Col-
 lect for Whitsunday. ^b 1 Cor. xii. 5, 6. ^c Acts v. 3, 4.
^d Heb. ix. 14. ^e Gen. i. 2. ^f Psalm cxxxix. 7.

our Church. He “searcheth all things, “even the deep things of God,” to whom he beareth the same relation as the “spirit “of a man” beareth to a man^g. He was sent by Christ^h, and “proceedeth from the “Fatherⁱ,” and “God hath sent forth the “Spirit of his Son into our hearts^k.” He is distinct from the Father and the Son; for it was “through the Eternal Spirit, that “Christ offered himself without spot to “God^l;” and yet “such as the Father is, “such is the Son, and such is the Holy “Ghost^m;” for the nameⁿ in which we are baptized is one, and the mystery^o is one. It was the Divine Spirit which moved the holy men of old to speak “of the sufferings “of Christ, and of the glory that should “follow^p,” and he came to “bring all “things to the remembrance^q” of the Apostles, and to “guide them in all truth^r.” He distributeth as he will the different gifts,

^g 1 Cor. x. 11. ^h John xv. 26. xvi. 7. ⁱ John xv. 26.
^k Gal. iv. 6. ^l Heb. ix. 14. ^m Creed of St. Athanasius.
ⁿ Matth. xxviii. 19. ^o Col. ii. 2. ^p 1 Pet. i. 11, 12.
^q 2 Pet. i. 21. ^r John xiv. 26. ^s John xvi. 13.

administrations, and operations^s of the Church, and likewise “helpeth our infirmities^t ;” and it is “through the power of the Holy Ghost, that the God of hope filleth us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope^u .”

Thus are we authorized in professing our belief “in God the Father, who made us and all the world ; in God the Son, who redeemed us and all mankind ; and in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth us and all the elect people of God^x .”

8. These are our professions of faith concerning God ; of ourselves we confess, that “we have left undone those things which we ought to have done ; we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us^y .” In the same spirit of humiliation “we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed by thought, word, and deed against *the* Divine

^s 1 Cor. xii. 4—6. ^t Rom. viii. 26. ^u Ibid. xv. 13.

^x Church Catechism. ^y General Confession.

“ Majesty, most justly provoking *his* wrath
 “ and indignation against us^z.” The Arti-
 cle teaches the cause of this disobedience :
 “ Original sin standeth not in the following
 “ of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk,
 “ but it is the fault and corruption of the
 “ nature of every man, that naturally is
 “ engendered of the offspring of Adam,
 “ whereby man is very far gone from ori-
 “ ginal righteousness, and is of his own
 “ nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh
 “ lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and
 “ therefore in every person born into this
 “ world, it deserveth God’s wrath and
 “ damnation. And this infection of na-
 “ ture doth remain, yea, in them that are
 “ regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh
 “ . . . is not subject to the law of God^a.”
 We are “ by nature born in sin, and the
 “ children of wrath^b.” So saith the Apo-
 stle; we “ were by nature children of
 “ wrath^c :” for “ in Adam” not only did
 all die^d, but all did sin^e, and “ by one

^z Communion Office. ^a Art. IX. ^b Church Cate-
 chism. ^c Ephes. ii. 3. ^d 1 Cor. xv. 22. ^e Rom. v. 12.

“ man’s disobedience the many were made
 “ sinners^f,” and “ judgment came upon
 “ all men to condemnation^g,” and “ the
 “ whole world” became liable to the judg-
 ment of God^h. Hence also are our hearts
 “ deceitful above all things, desperately
 “ wickedⁱ,” and continually prone to evil.
 “ The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and
 “ the spirit against the flesh, and these are
 “ contrary the one to the other, so that we
 “ cannot do the things that we would^k.”

9. It is declared, that “ the condition of
 “ man after the fall of Adam is such, that
 “ he cannot turn and prepare himself by
 “ his own natural strength and good works
 “ to faith and calling upon God: where-
 “ fore we have no power to do good works
 “ pleasant and acceptable to God, without
 “ the grace of God by Christ preventing us,
 “ and working with us when we have that
 “ good will^l.” To the same effect every
 child is taught, that he is not able of him-
 self “ to walk in the commandments of God,

^f Rom. v. 19. ^g Rom. v. 18. ^h Rom. iii. 19. ⁱ Jer.
 xvii. 9. ^k Gal. v. 17. ^l Art. X.

“ and to serve him without his special
 “ grace^m.” The same doctrine is expressed
 in many of our Collects. “ As we are
 “ sore let and hindered in running the race
 “ that is set before us,” we pray “ that
 “ God’s bountiful grace and mercy may
 “ speedily help and deliver usⁿ.” “ By
 “ reason of the frailty of our nature we
 “ cannot always stand upright^o.” “ We
 “ have no power of ourselves to help our-
 “ selves^p.” “ Through the weakness of
 “ our mortal nature we can do no good
 “ thing without^q” God. “ The frailty of man
 “ without *him* cannot but fall^r.” “ With-
 “ out *him* we are not able to please^s *him* :”
 and therefore we pray, that “ as by *his*
 “ special grace preventing us, *he doth* put
 “ into our hearts good desires, so by *his*
 “ continual help we may bring the same
 “ to good effect^t.” These expressions of

^m Catechism. ⁿ Collect for fourth Sunday in Advent.
^o Collect for fourth Sunday after Epiphany. ^p Collect
 for second Sunday in Lent. ^q Collects for first and ninth
 Sundays after Trinity. ^r Collect for fifteenth Sunday
 after Trinity. ^s Collect for nineteenth Sunday after
 Trinity. ^t Collect for Easter Day.

deep and unfeigned humility are of heavenly origin, and it is the Apostle's doctrine, that while "we work out our own salvation with
 "fear and trembling, it is God who work-
 "eth in us both to will and to do of his
 "good pleasure^u." "No man can come
 "unto me," saith our Lord, "except the
 "Father draw him^x;" and "without me
 "ye can do nothing^y." "We are not suffi-
 "cient of ourselves to think any thing as
 "of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of
 "God^z." "The Spirit also helpeth our
 "infirmities^a," for "the natural man re-
 "ceiveth not the things of the Spirit of
 "God; for foolishness is in him: neither
 "can he know them, because they are spi-
 "ritually discerned^b."

10. Thus corrupted, thus assisted, it is declared "of the justification of man," that "we are accounted righteous before
 "God only for the merit of our Lord and
 "Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not
 "for our own works or deservings. Where-

^u Philip. ii. 12, 13. ^x John vi. 44. ^y John xv. 5.
^z 2 Cor. iii. 5. ^a Rom. viii. 26. ^b 1 Cor. ii. 14.

“ fore that we are justified by faith only is
 “ a most wholesome doctrine, and very full
 “ of comfort^c.” It is also very agreeable
 to the Scriptures; “ For by grace have we
 “ been saved, through faith: and that not
 “ of ourselves, it is the gift of God . . . not
 “ of works, lest any man should boast^d.”
 For “ all have sinned and come short of
 “ the glory of God, being justified freely
 “ by his grace, through the redemption
 “ that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath
 “ set forth to be a propitiation through
 “ faith in his blood, to declare his right-
 “ eousness for the remission of sins that are
 “ past, through the forbearance of God,
 “ to declare his righteousness, that he is
 “ just, in justifying him that believeth in
 “ Jesus^e.”

11. “ Works done before the grace of
 “ Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit,
 “ are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as
 “ they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ,
 “ neither do they make men meet to re-
 “ ceive grace, or . . . to deserve grace of

^c Art. XI. ^d Ephes. ii. 8, 9. ^e Rom. iii. 23—26.

“congruity^f.” Salvation is always^g attributed in the Scriptures to the grace of God, independently of our works: and according to the Apostle’s argument, “if Abraham had been justified by works, he would have had occasion to glory, but not before God: for to him that worketh the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness^h.”

12. So decidedly does our Church maintain the doctrine “of obtaining eternal salvation only by the name of Christ,” that it is declared, that “they also are to be had accursed that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of natureⁱ.” For although in the equity of God none but those that “have sinned in the law shall

^f Art. XIII. ^g Compare Ephes. ii. 8, 9. Titus iii. 5.

^h Rom. iv. 2, 4, 5. ⁱ Art. XVIII.

“ be judged by the law^k ;” yet according to the authority alleged in the Article, there is salvation in no other than in Jesus Christ, “ for there is no other name under heaven “ given amongst men, whereby we must be “ saved^l. ”

13. Thus is the justification of man ascribed by our Church to the only merits of Christ Jesus our Lord. It is also maintained, that though “ good works, which “ are the fruits of faith, and follow after “ justification, cannot put away our sins, “ and endure the severity of God’s judgment^m, ” for in his sight “ shall no man “ living be justifiedⁿ; ” and if there was not “ mercy ” with him, if he was “ extreme “ to mark what is done amiss, ” no man could endure it^o; “ yet are they pleasing “ and acceptable to God in Christ, ” nor is he “ unrighteous to forget our works and “ the labour of love^p. ” These good works “ do spring out necessarily of a true and “ lively faith, insomuch that by them a

^k Rom. ii. 12.

^l Acts iv. 12.

^m Art. XII.

ⁿ Psalm cxliiii. 2.

^o Psalm cxxx. 3.

^p Heb. vi. 10.

“ lively faith may be as evidently known
 “ as a tree discerned by the fruit:” for
 “ faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being
 “ alone;” it is dead, even “ as the body
 “ without the spirit, or without breath, is
 “ dead^q.”

II. 1. Our Church, deriving her morality from these principles of faith, admits not “ of works of supererogation,” of which it is declared, that “ voluntary works besides, over and above God’s commandments, which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety: for by them men do declare, that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake, than of bounden duty is required. Whereas Christ saith plainly, ‘ When ye have done all that are commanded to you, say, We are unprofitable servants.’ ”

2. The moral precepts which our Church delivers are deduced from the two great Commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets, and embrace the

^q James ii. 17. 26. ^r Art. XIV.

several particulars of duty which we owe to God, to our neighbour, and ourselves. The summary of Christian duties, which is provided for the instruction of children in the Catechism; the rule of relative duties, of husbands and wives in the solemnization of marriage; of sponsors, and the children for whom they stand, in the administration of Baptism; the daily exhortations to the confession of sin, at Morning and Evening Prayer; the several addresses in the Office of the Holy Communion; the solemn annual invitation to repentance and amendment of life in the Communion Office; and the affectionate admonition to the sick and dying in the Visitation Office; are all inimitable compilations of inspired and scriptural morality.

3. In her political maxims, our Church reserves to the king's majesty the prerogative of ruling "all estates and degrees committed to his charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and *of restraining* with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers^s." She teaches

^s Art. XXXVII.

her children “to honour and obey the king,
 “and all that are in authority under him^t;”
 and she offers her earnest prayers and in-
 tercessions for all “Christian kings, princes,
 “and governors, and especially for our
 “king, that under him we may be godly
 “and quietly governed^u:” “that he, know-
 “ing whose minister he is, may above all
 “things seek *God’s* honour and glory,
 “and that we and all his subjects, duly
 “considering whose authority he hath, may
 “faithfully serve, honour, and humbly
 “obey him, in *God* and for *God*, accord-
 “ing to *his* blessed word and ordinance^x.”
 These sentiments so exactly coincide with
 the doctrine of the Apostle, that it may
 seem superfluous to recite his instruction,
 to pray “for kings and all that are in
 “authority, that we may lead a quiet and
 “peaceable life, in all godliness and ho-
 “nesty^y;” that “there is no power but of
 “God;” that “the powers which be are
 “ordained of God^z;” and that “he bear-

^t Catechism.

^u Communion Office.

^x Ibid.

^y 1 Tim. ii. 2.

^z Rom. xiii. 1.

“eth not the sword in vain, for he is the
 “minister of God, an avenger to execute
 “wrath upon him that doeth evil^a.”

Under this sanction of the sword not being borne in vain, it is a principle of the Church, that “the laws of the realm may
 “punish Christian men with death for
 “heinous and grievous offences^b,” some of which are rendered capital by the law of Moses, of which the penal provisions ought not to be inconsiderately or unnecessarily multiplied. “It is lawful *also* for
 “Christian men, at the command of the
 “magistrate, to wear weapons and serve in
 “the wars^c,” those scourges of an avenging God, which no inspired prophet has proscribed. “While we confess that vain and
 “rash swearing is forbidden by our Lord
 “Jesus Christ, and James his Apostle; so
 “we judge that Christian religion doth not
 “prohibit but that a man may swear when
 “the magistrate requireth, in a cause of
 “faith and charity, so it be done according
 “to the prophets teaching, in judgment,

^a Rom. xiii. 4.

^b Art. XXXVII.

^c Ibid.

“justice, and truth^d.” Our Lord himself complied with the adjuration of the high-priest^e; and the only oaths which he or his Apostle interdicted^f, were the irrelevant swearing of idle conversation. Private property is reserved by our Church to the proprietor; and “the riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same . . . Notwithstanding every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor according to his ability^g.” This is agreeable to the apostolic rule, that every man should give “as God hath prospered him^h,” “as good stewards of the manifold grace or bounty of Godⁱ.”

III. Such is the faith, such are the moral laws, and such the political maxims which the Church of England maintains, deriving them from the Scriptures of truth. In her views of ecclesiastical polity she observes the same rule; and, in the several

^d Art. XXXIX. ^e Matt. xxvi. 63. ^f Matt. v. 34—37. James v. 12. ^g Art. XXXVIII. ^h 1 Cor. xvi. 2. ⁱ 1 Pet. iv. 10.

Articles in which she discourses of the authority of the Church, she is scrupulously jealous of having scriptural warrant for her positions.

I. It is her definition, that “ the visible
 “ Church of Christ is a congregation of
 “ faithful men, in the which the pure word
 “ of God is preached, and the sacraments be
 “ duly administered, according to Christ’s
 “ ordinance, in all those things that of
 “ necessity are requisite to the same^k.”
 With an acknowledgment of the actual errancy of particular Churches, she maintains, that “ the Church hath power to
 “ decree rites and ceremonies, and autho-
 “ rity in controversies of faith; and yet it
 “ is not lawful for the Church to ordain
 “ any thing that is contrary to God’s word
 “ written; neither may it so expound one
 “ place of Scripture, that it be repugnant
 “ to another. Wherefore, although the
 “ Church be a witness and a keeper of
 “ holy Writ, yet as it ought not to decree
 “ any thing against the same, so besides

^k Art. XIX.

“ the same ought it not to enforce any
 “ thing to be believed for necessity of sal-
 “ vation^l.” So strong is her conviction of
 the errancy of man, and of the only pa-
 ramount authority of the Scriptures, that
 in describing the powers of General Coun-
 cils, which “ may not be gathered together
 “ without the authority and will of princes :
 “ and when they be gathered together,
 “ forasmuch as they be an assembly of
 “ men, whereof all be not governed with
 “ the Spirit and word of God, they may
 “ err, and sometimes have erred, even in
 “ things pertaining to God :” she again
 determines that “ things ordained by them
 “ as necessary to salvation have neither
 “ strength nor authority, unless it may be
 “ declared that they be taken out of holy
 “ Scripture^m.”

This authority which is claimed to the
 Church, in dependence upon the Scrip-
 tures, is recommended by the precedent,
 in which the first controversy of faith was
 referred to the Apostles, who decided what

^l Art. XX.

^m Art. XXI.

“seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to
 “themⁿ.” The regulation of rites and
 ceremonies has the advantage of the same
 example; for not only did the Apostle de-
 clare what he ordained “in all churches^o,”
 and that he would “set other things in
 “order” when he came^p, but the churches
 actually appealed to his judgment upon
 these occasions^q. Our Church, in a more
 formal discourse of ceremonies prefixed to
 the Liturgy, declares, that there are some,
 “which, although they have been devised
 “by man, yet it is thought good to reserve
 “them still, as well for a decent order in
 “the Church, for the which they were first
 “devised, as because they pertain to edifi-
 “cation, whereunto all things done in the
 “Church, as the Apostle teacheth, ought
 “to be referred. And although the keep-
 “ing or omitting of a ceremony, in itself
 “considered, is but a small thing, yet the
 “wilful and contemptuous transgression
 “and breaking of a common order and

ⁿ Acts xv. 28. ^o 1 Cor. vii. 17. ^p 1 Cor. xi. 34.
^q 1 Cor. i. 11. vii. 1.

“ discipline is no small offence before God.
 “ ‘ Let all things be done among you,’
 “ saith St. Paul, ‘ in a seemly and due or-
 “ der;’ the appointment of which order
 “ pertaineth not to private men^r.”

The same language occurs in the Article of the traditions of the Church, which evidently refers to the forms which have been handed down from primitive antiquity:
 “ It is not necessary that traditions and
 “ ceremonies be in all places one and ut-
 “ terly like; for at all times they have
 “ been diverse, and may be changed ac-
 “ cording to the diversities of countries,
 “ times, and men’s manners; so that no-
 “ thing be ordained against God’s word.
 “ Whosoever through his private judg-
 “ ment willingly and purposely doth
 “ openly break the traditions and cere-
 “ monies of the Church which be not re-
 “ pugnant to the word of God, and be or-
 “ dained and approved by common au-
 “ thority, ought to be rebuked openly,

^r “ Of Ceremonies, why some be abolished and others
 “ retained.” Compare the last Rubrics at the end of the
 Offices of the Communion and the Baptism of Infants.

“ that others may fear to do the like, as
 “ he that offendeth against the common
 “ order of the Church, and hurteth the
 “ authority of the magistrate, and wound-
 “ eth the consciences of the weak brethren.
 “ Every particular or national Church hath
 “ authority to ordain, change, and abolish
 “ ceremonies or rites of the Church, or-
 “ dained only by man’s authority, so that
 “ all things be done to edifying^s.”

Let it not be thought that we have in-
 sisted too long upon the authority of the
 Church, knowing that her Articles on this
 subject have unjustly excited much offence,
 that in the formation of them she adheres
 implicitly and scrupulously to the authority
 of the Scriptures, and that she contem-
 plates the revision of her ritual in compli-
 ance with the same authority.

2. There is another act of ecclesias-
 tical power, in which the doctrine of our
 Church is justified by the clearest precept
 and practice of Scripture^t. “ That per-

^s Art, XXXIV. ^t Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 5. 1 Tim.
 i. 20. Titus iii. 10.

“ son which, by open denunciation of the
 “ Church, is rightly cut off from the unity
 “ of the Church, and excommunicated,
 “ ought to be taken of the whole multi-
 “ tude of the faithful as an heathen and
 “ publican, until he be openly reconciled
 “ by penance, and received into the Church
 “ by a judge that hath authority there-
 “ unto ^u.”

3. In the judgment of our Church, “ it
 “ is evident unto all men diligently reading
 “ the holy Scripture and ancient authors,
 “ that from the Apostles’ time there have
 “ been these orders of ministers in Christ’s
 “ Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons^x.”
 Instructed also by the word of God, that
 no man can preach “ except he be sent^y,”
 or take upon himself the priesthood, with-
 out being “ called of God^z,” our Church
 maintains, that “ it is not lawful for any
 “ man to take upon himself the office of
 “ public preaching, or ministering the sacra-

^u Art. XXXIII. ^x Preface to the Form or Manner of
 making, ordaining, and consecrating of Bishops, Priests,
 and Deacons, &c. ^y Rom. x. 14. ^z Heb. v. 4.

“ ments in the congregation, before he be
 “ lawfully called, and sent to execute the
 “ same. And those we ought to judge
 “ lawfully called and sent, which be chosen
 “ and called to this work by men who
 “ have public authority given unto them
 “ in the congregation, to call and send
 “ ministers into the Lord’s vineyard^a.”
 “ The Book of Consecration of Archbi-
 “ shops and Bishops, and Ordering of
 “ Priests and Deacons . . . doth contain all
 “ things necessary to such consecration
 “ and ordering; neither hath it any thing
 “ that of itself is superstitious and ungodly.
 “ And therefore, whosoever are conse-
 “ crated or ordered according to the rites
 “ of that book . . . we decree all such to be
 “ rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated
 “ and ordered^b.”

This division of the ministerial order is certainly agreeable to the form of the Christian Church, both before our Lord’s ascension, when there were with himself the Apostles and the Seventy in the subor-

^a Art. XXIII.

^b Art. XXXVI.

dinate offices ; and after his ascension, when the Apostles were elevated above the Presbyters or the Seventy, and the Deacons, whom they ordained. The form of ordination, after previous trial and examination, by the imposition of the hands of the Bishop and the Presbyters, may be traced to various examples and authorities recorded in the Scriptures^c.

These “ Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, “ are not commanded by God’s law, either “ to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage^d,” which is one of the signs of the great apostasy: and it is “ a thing plainly repugnant to the word of “ God and the custom of the primitive “ Church, to have public prayer in the “ Church, or to minister the Sacraments “ in a tongue not understood of the “ people^e.” “ Although in the visible “ Church, the evil be ever mingled with the “ good,” as was represented in the parable, “ and sometimes the evil have chief

^c Acts vi. 6. xiv. 23. 1 Tim. iv. 14. v. 22. 2 Tim. i. 6. ii. 2. Titus iii. 1. ^d Art. XXXII. ^e Art. XXIV.

“ authority in the ministration of the word
 “ and sacraments,” as in the flock of Christ,
 Judas betrayed, Peter denied, and Tho-
 mas doubted; “ yet, forasmuch as they do
 “ not the same in their own name, but in
 “ Christ’s, and do minister by his commis-
 “ sion and authority, we may use their mi-
 “ nistry, both in hearing the word of God,
 “ and in receiving of the sacraments^f.”
 So Christ commanded the Jews to observe
 all things which were prescribed, even by
 the disobedient Scribes who occupied “ the
 “ seat of Moses^g.” “ Neither is the effect
 “ of Christ’s ordinance taken away by their
 “ wickedness, nor the grace of God’s gifts
 “ diminished from such as by faith and
 “ rightly do receive the sacraments minis-
 “ tered unto them, which be effectual be-
 “ cause of Christ’s institution and promise,
 “ although they be ministered by evil men.
 “ Nevertheless it appertaineth to the dis-
 “ cipline of the Church, that inquiry be
 “ made of evil ministers, and that they be
 “ accused by those that have knowledge of

^f Art. XXVI.

^g Matt. xxiii. 2.

“ their offences, and finally, being found
 “ guilty, by just judgment be deposed^h.”

5. Our Church admits two Sacraments only to have been “ ordained of Christ,” and to be “ generally necessary to salvationⁱ.” “ By this word Sacrament is “ meant, an outward visible sign of inward “ spiritual grace . . . a means whereby we “ receive the same, and a pledge to assure “ us thereof^k.” They are “ certain sure “ witnesses and effectual signs of grace, “ and God’s good will towards us, by the “ which he doth work invisibly in us, and “ doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him^l.” Our Church denies the sacramental nature of the five reputed Sacraments of the Church of Rome, because “ they have not any “ visible sign or ceremony ordained of “ God^m :” and she also rejects the sacrifices of masses as “ blasphemous fables and “ dangerous deceits,” because “ the offering of Christ once made is that perfect

^h Art. XXVI. ⁱ Catechism. ^k Ibid. ^l Art. XXV.
^m Ibid.

“redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that aloneⁿ.” It is plain that the efficacy of the Sacraments, in the judgment of our Church, is derived wholly from the institution of Christ.

6. Our Church, according to Christ’s institution, administers Baptism “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost^o.” She requires of persons to be baptized, repentance and faith^p; a renunciation of the Devil, the world, and the flesh; an assent to all the articles of the Christian faith; and a promise of obedience to God’s holy will and commandments^q. These requirements coincide with Peter’s advice to the Jews, to repent and be baptized^r; with Philip’s demand of the Ethiopian Eunuch, that he should believe with all his heart^s; and

ⁿ Art. XXXI. ^o Matt. xxviii. 19. ^p Catechism.

^q Ibid. and Offices of Baptism. ^r Acts ii. 38. ^s Acts viii. 37.

with the doctrine of Peter, that Baptism implies the stipulation of “a good conscience^t.” The spiritual grace of Baptism is “a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace^u.” Baptism is “a sign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed and grace increased, by virtue of prayer unto God^x.” Thus according to our Lord, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved^y;” thus “doth baptism save us^z;” and thus hath God saved us by “the washing of regeneration^a,” without which no person can “enter into the kingdom of God^b.” In

^t 1 Pet. iii. 21.

^u Catechism.

^x Art. XXVII.

^y Mark xvi. 16.

^z 1 Pet. iii. 21.

^a Titus iii. 5.

^b John iii. 5.

the same spirit did Peter exhort the Jews to be “baptized for the remission of sins,” and that they might “receive the gift of “the Holy Spirit^c.” It is not meant, but that men may “fall into sin after baptism. “After we have received the Holy Ghost, “we may depart from grace given, and fall “into sin; and by the grace of God we may “rise again, and amend our lives^d:” and therefore the baptized person is exhorted in scriptural language to “die unto sin, “and rise again unto righteousness, con- “tinually mortifying all . . . evil and cor- “rupt affections, and daily proceeding in “all virtue and godliness of living^e.” “The “baptism of infants is retained as most “agreeable with the institution of Christ^f;” and infants, “when they are come to age, “are bound^g” to take their baptismal engagements on themselves in the apostolic ordinance of Confirmation.

7. Our Church maintains, that the Supper of the Lord was ordained “for the

^c Acts ii. 38. ^d Art. XVI. ^e Baptism of Infants.

^f Art. XXVII. ^g Catechism.

“ continual remembrance of the sacrifice of
 “ the death of Christ^h:” for “ as oft as we
 “ eat the bread, and drink the cup, we do
 “ shew forth the Lord’s death till he
 “ comeⁱ.” “ The bread which we break
 “ is a partaking of the body of Christ, and
 “ likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking
 “ of the blood of Christ^k.” These are apo-
 stolical words, and “ both the parts of the
 “ Lord’s Sacrament, by Christ’s ordinance
 “ and commandment, ought to be minis-
 “ tered to all Christian men alike^l.” The
 Apostle’s argument concerning the neces-
 sity of a previous examination^m is repeatedly
 enforcedⁿ, and the most affecting earnest-
 ness is used in warning men of the danger
 of an unworthy celebration.

8. Our whole Liturgy, if Liturgies have
 not themselves the warrant of Scripture,
 claims respect for the richness of its scrip-
 tural phrases and allusions. In the pre-
 scribed method of reading the Scriptures,
 our Church has made larger provision for

^h Catechism. ⁱ 1 Cor. xi. 26. ^k Article XXVIII.

^l Art. XXX. ^m 1 Cor. xi. 28. ⁿ Art. XXIX. Cate-
 chism. Communion Office.

the diffusion of scriptural knowledge than any other Christian society; and in the form, subject, and substance of all its prayers, in the method of administering sacred offices, and in the simplicity of its rites and ceremonies, our Liturgy breathes an apostolical spirit, it follows the rules of apostolical decency and order, and seeks the important end of apostolical edification.

Here let the trial of the spirits that are in the world determine. We have proved all things. Those which we have shown to be not of God, because they cannot be reconciled with the Scriptures, let us scrupulously avoid: and let us stedfastly hold fast the principles of that Church, which is good, because it is scriptural in its forms of divine worship, in its moral precepts, in its political axioms, in its ecclesiastical polity, and in its general profession of the truth. Yet a little while, and some of those who now hear me will be called from these regions of peaceful study and preparation, to contend with the spirits of error, and, for the sake of themselves or of others, to expose their weakness, and struggle with

their power. In that perilous hour of trial, let them not fear to act as the members of a scriptural Church, and let them maintain all their positions, so as to argue nothing “against the Scripture” or “besides the Scripture.” Let them remember always, that though the Homilies “contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and “necessary” for those times in which they were written, the Church of England uses not their authority for the decision of any controversy, or the establishment of any truth, but that it is her doctrine, “that “whatsoever is not read in holy Scripture, “nor may be proved thereby, is not to “be required of any man, that it should “be believed as an article of the faith, or “be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.”

Let this doctrine, which runs through all our articles, direct the path of the young theologian, and persuade him above all things to acquire a competence of that scriptural knowledge which renders the man of God “wise” in matters of salvation, and “thoroughly furnished unto all

“good works.” Let him possess whatever of profane literature, whatever of ancient or modern erudition, can be made to bear upon the exposition or confirmation of Christian truth. But in a Church which defers not implicitly to the Fathers or the Reformers, but to the sole authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles, the writer who would convince, and the preacher who would persuade, must learn to wield with judgment and with skill “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” It is with this weapon that he must decide the doubts which arise in his own mind, or perplex the faith of others; that he must meet every adversary of our “common salvation,” and contend “earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints,” until he shall conquer “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

May this blessing of peace descend upon every good soldier of our Lord Jesus Christ, who carries on his war in this spirit and for these ends! May he prosper the labours of all who seek to facilitate the acquirement of scriptural knowledge, and

give comfort in all their trials to those whose faith is founded on the assurances of his word. May he perpetuate and enlarge the influence and ascendancy of that Church, which in all her formularies professes to conform with his authority; and whatever deviations from the ostensible standard may be found, or seem to be found in her articles, her ritual, or her civil constitution, and the appropriation of her revenues, may he in mercy pardon, till in wisdom and in power he shall mould the times for their reformation and removal. In the jarring of contending sects, may he suffer us so to speak “the truth in love,” as to accelerate the accomplishment of the consolatory prophecy, that all shall come “in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

SERMON VIII.

CONCLUSION.

EPHES. iv. 15.

But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

THE unity of the Christian Church, and the means and motives of that unity, the divine constitution of its ministry, the design and perpetuity of a settled order and economy, and the fixed principles and methodical enlargement of the Church until the end of time, are the subjects of the Apostle's discourse in the first part of this chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. Himself the founder of the Church at Ephesus, he watched over its concerns with the most affectionate anxiety, and embraced every opportunity of preventing the

evil which threatened to disturb its peace, and corrupt the purity of its religious profession. For two years he exercised his personal ministry among the Ephesians, and recommended the things which concerned the kingdom of God with such zeal and efficacy, that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus; and the fame of his preaching and of his miracles was such, that many confessed the sins of their past lives, and that they who used curious arts burned their books in the presence of all men. “So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed.” The workmen who made silver images of Diana were alarmed by the Apostle’s success, and, under pretence that the temple of the great goddess would be despised, and her magnificence destroyed, at the instigation of the interested Demetrius, they joined in a persecution against the Apostle, who, after taking an affectionate leave of the disciples, departed into Macedonia^a.

It was not long before he had another

^a Acts xix. 1.—xx. 1.

opportunity of conferring with the pastors of his favourite flock, whom he summoned to meet him at Miletus. At this interview, he reminded them of his behaviour among them “at all seasons,” of his constant and unreserved communication with them in public and in private, of which the substance had been “repentance toward God, “and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” He acquainted them, that this would be the last time of their meeting upon earth, and he earnestly exhorted them to “take heed “to themselves, and to all the flock, over “which the Holy Ghost had made them “overseers, to feed the Church of God, “which he had purchased with his own “blood.” He warned them of the imminent dangers which threatened their peace, and the purity of their faith, exhorted them to corresponding vigilance, and commended them “to God, and to the word of his “grace, which was able to build them up, “and to give them inheritance among them “that are sanctified.” The final separation of a father and his family is always painful; and the pain is increased, when the parent

is aware of the dangers of his offspring, and the children are conscious of their weakness and infirmity. When Paul therefore parted from his Ephesian elders, it was but natural that they should all weep, and fall upon his neck, and kiss him, “sorrowing
“ most of all for the words which he had
“ spoken, that they should see his face no
“ more^b.”

In his personal absence from them, the Apostle still cared for the disciples at Ephesus, and used every precaution to counteract the evil which he anticipated and foretold. He left Timothy among them, to prevent the progress of strange and unauthorized doctrines^c; and, besides the two Epistles which he addressed to him concerning his conduct “in the house of God,” and the difficulties which he was likely to encounter in the execution of his high office, he wrote to them also a letter, in which he seems to refer to some of the evils which he had foretold. Among the various arguments which he uses to restrain the ravages

^b Acts xx. 17—38. ^c 1 Tim. i. 3.

of the “grievous wolves” who should “enter in among them, not sparing the flock,” and to control the excesses of those men who should arise from among themselves, “speaking perverted things, to draw away “disciples after them,” he dwells particularly upon the unity, order, and economy of the Church of Christ, and presses the necessity of settled principles and regulated liberality, to their edification and confirmation in the faith^d.

I. With the humility of mind which had distinguished his personal ministry among them, and which became his present situation as a “prisoner of the Lord,” he besought them, with the tenderness of a father, to “walk worthy of the vocation” where-with they had been called, and of which he had been the principal instrument and messenger. Their Christian profession required that they should act “with all lowliness and “meekness,” and without ambition of personal merit and distinction, “with long-suffering” and patience under evil; “for-

^d Ephes. iv. 1—16.

“ bearing one another in love,” and without resenting the provocations which they might receive, “ endeavouring,” with all constancy and perseverance, “ to keep,” to maintain, and preserve, “ the unity of the Spirit in the “ bond of peace,” and mutual condescension to the infirmities of others. The division, the disorder, and the confusion, which were very consistent with the Pagan worship and belief of many gods and many lords, were utterly irreconcilable with the objects of Christian faith and adoration. To us there is but “ one body,” one holy, universal Church, resting on a common foundation, and comprehending the whole family of Christ: there is “ one Spirit” of holiness and love, directing, regulating, sanctifying all the people of God; there is one common end and “ hope of our calling,” the “ crown of glory which fadeth “ not away^e ;” “ one Lord,” and only “ Mediator between God and man^f,” by whom, “ through the one Spirit, we have access to “ the Father^g ;” “ one faith,” delivered at

^e 1 Pet. v. 4. ^f 1 Tim. ii. 5. ^g Ephes. ii. 18.

once and for ever to the saints, for which we should earnestly contend^h; one “form of sound words,” which we are bound to hold fastⁱ; “one baptism” “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit^k,” “one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all.”

These therefore are the motives of Christian unity, to acknowledge the one God, to be baptized into the one faith, to be the disciples of the same Lord, illuminated by the same Spirit, and knit together and incorporated into one body. In this common family, however, there is no equality of gifts or offices, but “to every one of us hath grace been given,” according to our station and degree, not arbitrarily nor irrespectively, but “according to the measure of the gift of Christ,” and as is necessary to qualify us for the several offices which he hath appointed in his Church. The measure of the gift which he gave to his Church at his ascension was, that some

^h Jude 3. ⁱ 2 Tim. i. 13. ^k Matth. xxviii. 19.

should be “apostles; and some, prophets; “and some, evangelists; and some, pastors “and teachers.” These were the orders ordained by Christ himself; and the appropriate offices of these several orders are “the perfecting,” or the knitting together, of the saints, as of disjointed members into one compact and sound body, the subordinate “work of the ministry” or deaconship, and the ordinary edification and instruction of the body of Christ, or the building it together into an universal Church. These offices are not of a personal, local, or temporary nature, but are perpetually to be transmitted from generation to generation, until the Church shall receive its complement; and we all, from every clime, and of every age, “shall come “in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect “man, unto the measure of the stature of “the fulness of Christ.” It is a bright vision which is thus presented to the eye of the faithful, nor would it be easy to apprehend, without the light of prophecy, which shineth in the darkness of human error and

confusion, that the Church of Christ shall in the end be one and universal; one in faith and love, universal in its influence and effects.

Worthy of all praise and adoration is the goodness of the providence of God, in this dispensation to mankind, in the provision which he hath made for the prevention of error, and the perpetual preservation of the truth. The design with which he hath constituted the order and maintained the influence of his Church upon earth is, that we “should henceforth be no more children,” or like mariners upon a tempestuous ocean, “tossed to and fro,” without any port in view, or without skill to reach it; and “carried about,” at the pleasure of “every wind of doctrine,” without power to take advantage of the tide, or to resist the opposing gale; the victims of “the sleight,” and imposing sophistry, and “cunning craftiness of men, who lie in wait to deceive,” and to make spoil of our indiscretion, through which we make shipwreck of our faith, or are driven into the ports of the enemy. These perils of the

inexperienced voyager have been foreseen and pointed out: and for our security and growth in strength and knowledge and happiness, it has been ordained in wisdom and in mercy, that “speaking the truth in love,” without compromising any part of divine revelation, or of charitable practice, we should “in all things,” in health and vigour, in beauty and symmetry of proportion, “grow up into him, who is the head, even Christ.” It is from him that the whole body “fitly joined together,” and compacted in elegance and solidity of form, “by that which every joint sup-
“plieth,” by the nourishment conveyed through all its veins and vessels, through all its sinews and muscles, according to the effectual working of every part in measure, in the lively and healthy action of every member in its appointed office, “maketh
“increase” of the external form and the internal vigour “of the body, to the edify-
“ing and establishment of itself in love.”

II. The substance of these arguments, collected from a portion of Scripture addressed by the most distinguished of the

Apostles to a Church which enjoyed a more than ordinary share of his favour and instruction, and in the constitution of which the outlines of the ministerial order may be observed more distinctly than in that of any other Church, may be denounced as obsolete and antiquated in the systems of modern theology. The unity of the Church may be explained away; its constituted order may be violated in practice, and controverted in theory; and the end and design of the goodness of God may be overlooked by the careless, or suppressed by the designing. It may not therefore be an useless or uninteresting conclusion to these discourses to pursue the several topics of the Apostle's argument, to explain the nature of Christian unity, to uphold the divine institution and settled order of the Christian ministry, and to state the objects of their exertion, with the proper method and spirit of prosecuting them to a successful issue, which is the enlargement and edification of the Church in its dependence upon Christ.

1. The Apostle evidently distinguishes

between “the unity of the Spirit” and “the bond of peace;” between the object to be attained, and the method of attaining it. Lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, and mutual forbearance, are as connecting links “in the bond of peace,” and are subordinate means, by which we are to endeavour earnestly “to keep the unity of the Spirit.” The unity which is required and described in the Scriptures is very different from that accommodation of principle, that mutual toleration of disputed opinions, in which the unity of the Spirit is sometimes supposed to consist. “The unity of the Spirit,” in a subsequent clause of this chapter, is called “the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God¹;” and is described in other passages as an exemption from all schisms and divisions; as a being “perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment^m;” a thinking the same thing one with another, that we may “with one mind and one mouth glorify Godⁿ.” It is to be “of one

¹ Ephes. iv. 13. ^m 1 Cor. i. 10. ⁿ Romans xv. 5, 6.

“ accord, of one mind^o.” It is compared with the unity of Christ with God^p; with the unity of one fold under one shepherd^q; and with the unity of many branches in one tree^r, of many members in one body under one head^s, and of many apartments in one house or temple, built on a common foundation^t.

Such figures and comparisons exclude all diversity from the notion of Christian unity; and it is obvious to remark, that the principles on which the Apostle recommends and maintains “ the unity of the “ Spirit” are such as imply that this unity is of an absolute, and not a figurative kind. It is the unity of the Christian body; it is the unity of the heavenly Spirit; it is the unity of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is the unity of our faith, our hope, and our baptism; it is the unity of the one God and Father of all. If in these motives there be any contrariety or diversity, then may Christian unity be resolved into a mutual toleration of opposite opinions, in prefer-

^o Philipp. ii. 2. ^p John xviii. 22, 23. ^q John x. 16.

^r John xv. 5. ^s 1 Cor. 12. 27. ^t Ephes. ii. 19—22.

ence to that stricter unity of faith and knowledge and judgment, which, if the world has not exhibited it, or despairs of attaining it, is enforced by the Apostle as the object of Christian exertion, and proposed as the consolatory object of Christian hope. Let not the suppression of this hope in the darkness of prevailing error and conflicting opinion lead to an unchristian despondence of the possibility, or an unmanly neglect of the duty of accomplishing it; but diligently let us labour for a legitimate end, and use the proper means of meekness, of wisdom, forbearance, and condescension one toward another. It was a pure spirit of Christian benevolence which dictated the Apostle's exhortation to the Philippians, when he intreated them to fulfil his joy in minding the same thing, "having the same love, being joined together in soul, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves".^u Having

^u Philipp. ii. 2, 3.

exhorted the same Philippians to follow the example of his diligence in contending for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, he says ; “ As many therefore
 “ as are perfect, let us be thus minded : and
 “ if in any thing ye be otherwise minded,
 “ God shall reveal even this unto you. Ne-
 “ vertheless, whereunto we have already
 “ attained, let us walk by the same rule, let
 “ us mind the same thing^x.”

These were the Apostle's notions of Christian unity, with which it is not possible to reconcile the popular misapprehension of the text, in which the Apostle, speaking of the furtherance of the Gospel during his imprisonment at Rome, observes, that in “ every way, whether in pretence or
 “ truth, Christ is preached ; and I therein
 “ do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice^y.” The sole object of his rejoicing was, that Christ was preached : he could not rejoice, that Christ was preached of “ envy and strife,” of “ contention, not sincerely,” but “ in
 “ pretence” only ; for this contentious spirit

^x Philipp. iii. 15, 16. ^y Philipp. i. 18.

he pointedly discountenances and condemns even in this Epistle; nor could the offence derive any palliation from its being an act of opposition to his authority, an attempt “to add affliction to his bonds.”

2. In settling the unity of his Church, Christ hath had consideration of the different capacities of men, and of the different offices which they are intended to occupy, and therefore it is that “grace is given to every one of us,” not equally nor arbitrarily, but “according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” This measure is to be ascertained by the order which Christ hath established in his Church. At his ascension, when he gave gifts unto men, “he gave some, apostles; some, prophets; some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.” These gifts he gave when he finally sent his Apostles, even as the Father had sent him, and said unto them, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained^z.” These offices which are enu-

^z John xx. 22, 23.

merated by the Apostle, and in a more multiplied and diversified form in the Epistle to the Corinthians, with an especial distinction of “ first, apostles ; secondarily, “ prophets ; thirdly, teachers ^a ;” may be reduced into the three distinct orders of Apostles, or Bishops ; Prophets, or Presbyters ; and Teachers, Evangelists, or Deacons.

It is of importance to observe, that not only have these three orders been from the earliest times recognized in the Church of Christ, but also that it is formally declared by the Apostle, that Christ “ gave” them, that God “ set” them, placed them, instituted them “ in the Church” of Christ. If he did not fix the order of his Church, as some have imagined that he did not, then is it a question of the highest moment ; not whether one form of Church government is more expedient than another, but whether there is adequate authority to establish any form, or to justify any man in ministering to another. If a ministry is re-

^a ,1 Cor. xii. 28.

quisite, then it is a reasonable presumption that Christ did ordain a ministry, and many concurring passages of the Scriptures agree in establishing the fact, that he did ordain a form of ministerial order. The chief point of inquiry therefore is, what was the ministry which he did ordain : and on a large and attentive examination of the New Testament, from an accurate analysis, and from a diligent consideration of the analogy of the many texts which speak of matters of ecclesiastical polity, and not only from the corroborative evidence of primitive antiquity, it may be shewn, that the ministerial order which Christ did ordain was of a triple form. It consisted during his personal ministration of himself as the chief Apostle, of the Twelve, and of the Seventy ; and after his ascension, this triple division was preserved in the distinct orders of Apostles, Prophets, and Deacons.

It is the more necessary to insist upon this divine constitution of the Christian ministry, because they who acknowledge the authority of Christ in one respect cannot easily dispute it in another. It is no

more than an act of common candour to believe, that many of the existing divisions of the Christian Church were originally founded, and continue to be supported by a doubt of the fact, whether Christ did ordain any ministry, or by a misconception of the form which he did ordain, or, more especially, by overlooking the distinct authority of the Apostles, and by confounding, from the ambiguity of the title, the Bishop of modern times with the scriptural Bishop, who was no more than a Presbyter. Another occasion of error is, that if Christ did ordain any ministry, it was but to answer a temporary purpose; and that when that purpose was accomplished, the Church was at liberty to deviate from the original form which was prescribed. But when Christ commissioned his Apostles, he promised to be with them “to the end of the “world^b,” and the objects to be prosecuted by their ministry (and no reason can be alleged, why the ministry itself should not be coextensive with the specific objects of

^b Matth. xxviii. 20.

its pursuit) were to continue “ till we all
“ come in the unity of the faith, and of the
“ knowledge of the Son of God, unto a per-
“ fect man, unto the measure of the stature of
“ the fulness of Christ,” whose Church shall
not receive its complement before the con-
summation of all things. Let the attention
of the young theologian be fixed upon these
facts, which rest on no doubtful evidence,
that Christ did ordain an ecclesiastical or-
der, and that that order was of a triple
form, and for a perpetual duration ; and
the admission of these facts will produce a
spirit of conformity and obedience to the
authority which Christ has ordained, and
a zealous discharge of the duties of his
appointed station.

3. It is a confirmation of this doctrine of
the triple form of the Christian Church,
that when St. Paul had arranged the mi-
nistry under five distinct names or classes,
he assigned to them but three offices or
objects of their exertion, “ the perfecting”
or knitting together of the saints, “ the
“ work of the ministry,” and “ the edify-
“ ing of the body of Christ.” The prin-

cial offices of knitting together, as the disjointed parts of a limb, and of edifying and compacting of different materials one solid house, justify the view which has been taken of Christian unity, and of the method of preserving it, through the ministrations of an authorized ministry. Whatever therefore be our station, let us faithfully discharge its duties; remembering always, that our office is to knit together, to heal, to build or edify, to consolidate, and to draw whatever is detached or separated more firmly and closely together. In all our doctrines it is our office to give effect to “the things with which one may “edify another^c ;” and in all our public and private exertions, to seek the establishment of that mutual order, dependence, and consistency, through the vigorous action of every member in its proper measure and proportion, without which, the several members of the Church, as a body, will be rent asunder, or, through an unequal pressure, the aisles of the building will be en-

^c Romans xiv. 19.

cumbered with the broken pillars, which should support the roof of the house and temple of our God.

4. The design of Christian unity, and of an authorized, subordinate, perpetual, edifying ministry, is, “that we be no more
“like children, tossed to and fro, and
“carried about with every wind of doctrine, through the sleight and cunning
“craftiness of men, whereby they lie in
“wait to deceive.” However it may become children without instruction, or instructors without authority, to embrace every variety of doctrine, it is required of the disciples of Christ, and especially of his ministers, to be fixed and settled in the opinions which they maintain, and to hold fast their profession without wavering, as men that have received their faith of him who testified what he had seen, and spake of that which he knew^d. Though men perplex us with curious questions concerning the Person of Christ, and the extent of his salvation; or concerning the rule of

^d John iii. 11.

faith, and the order of his Church, the wise instructor will not assent in succession to the doubts of this or that man, or exhibit a vacillating and undecided, a doubtful and double mind. He will apply his best talents to the understanding and exposition of the Christian doctrine, that he may be settled in his own principles, and not be shaken by the “sleight or cunning craftiness,” with which others “lie in wait to deceive.” He whose office is the instruction of others, and their establishment in fixed principles of religious knowledge, must use every precaution, which human infirmity will allow, not to be deceived or mistaken in any point of revealed doctrine.

Although in the wide compass of theology there will be many articles with which the most sedulous student will for a time be unacquainted; and many which at the maturest periods of life, and after the most attentive comparison of things “spiritual with spiritual,” he will not entirely comprehend, the wisdom of the wise will be shewn in reserve, and in the acknowledg-

ment of a suspended judgment, rather than in the temerity of embracing an erroneous doctrine, or the inconstancy of a perpetual fluctuation between what he maintains and what he denies. He will not pretend to be wiser than the Scriptures have made him, by deciding where they are silent, or questioning where they speak with authority. The young and the inexperienced will seek the advice of those who are wiser and of more learning than himself: and by friendly communication with his brethren, by diligent study and by earnest prayer, he will endeavour to establish himself in the true sense and meaning of the Scriptures. He will strive to deduce from them that only sense which those who wrote designed that they should bear in the minds of those who received them; and in the interpretation of them he will suffer no foreign bias upon his mind, except the consideration, that as they were dictated by the Holy Spirit, they may contain things "hard to be understood," but cannot contradict each other; and that as they are records of the common salvation,

they can contain nothing which is prejudicial to the consolation of hope, or to the unbounded mercies of God.

5. When his own principles are fixed, and he is fully persuaded in his own mind concerning the nature of Christian truth, as not to suffer the designing or the unstable to seduce him from the profession of it, he will make it his endeavour to speak the truth in love. This is the only liberality which the Gospel recognizes and recommends, and this liberality is authorized by all the example and all the precepts of our Lord and his Apostles. It is not a bigotted zeal for what misinformed or ignorant men suppose to be the truth, and which they labour to propagate with the sword of the persecutor, and the pen of the reviler; nor is it a compromise of any revealed truth, or a compliance in any unrevealed error, through a false and pretended love and compassion to human infirmity. It is a manly avowal of the truth as it is in Jesus; an earnest maintenance of the faith delivered to the saints, and registered in the holy Scriptures, published with all the meekness of wisdom,

and patience of instruction, which arise from a conviction of the importance to the souls of men that it should be believed.

There is no duty of the Christian ministry, in which this Christian liberality is not required, or in which it is not necessary to speak the truth in love. Whether we are called to preach to the most learned or the most ignorant, the most rude or the most refined of men, in the populous town or the sequestered village; it is truth, it is plain, scriptural, evangelical truth, which must be the subject of our preaching; and it is love, which must lead us to convince, instruct, persuade, and intreat those that hear us. When we minister in the chambers of the sick, there is nothing but the truth in love which becomes the occasion, which is worthy of the hearer to receive, or the preacher to deliver. If we be tempted to handle the pen of the polemic, whatever is beyond the truth, or destitute of love, will be seized as the highest advantage by the enemy, and defeat the object of our argument. Nor is there any thing, beside the consciousness of

speaking the truth in love, which can alleviate the labours of the faithful minister, or inspire him with consolation in the hour of death, and a well-grounded confidence in the day of judgment. It is not the praise of eloquence, or the fame of learning; it is not the arrogance of an unwise and un-discerning zeal; it is not the possession of the highest honours and emoluments of the Church, which will excuse the least indifference to the truth in love, in that day, “when the chief Shepherd shall appear^e,” and demand the account of all the subordinate pastors, how they have laboured to edify his Church, by preaching the truth which he taught in the spirit of love, which he exemplified. Even in the daily exercises of the parochial ministry, the weakness of the flesh will prevail over the best energies of the spirit, if there be not a conviction of the paramount importance of this duty, without which there will be neither patience to sustain the many inconveniences which every day presents, nor

^e 1 Pet. v. 4.

forbearance to submit to the continual interruptions of domestic privacy or studious application, nor perseverance to pursue the labours, the unceasing labours, of a vigilant superintendence of the Christian fold. When infidelity prevails in defiance of the labours of the ablest apologist, or when ignorance disdains to be instructed and vice to be reclaimed, he only who administers the truth in love will have the spirit to persevere, until the argument of truth shall convince the judgment, or the persuasions of love shall mend the heart. It is a consolatory promise, that they who are thus “wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they who turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever^f.”

6. Nor shall their reward be future only, or to themselves alone. Not only do they avoid the fatal error of those who mislead by not preaching the truth, or offend by not speaking it in love, and prepare the way for the division of the Church, and

^f Dan. xii. 3.

the destruction of themselves and those that hear them; but while they speak the truth in love, they see the fruit of their labour, when men “grow up in all things
“into him who is the head, even Christ; from
“whom the whole body fitly joined toge-
“ther and compacted, by that which every
“joint supplieth, according to the effectual
“working of every part in measure, maketh
“increase of the body to the edifying of
“itself in love.” Let it never be forgotten, that we are members of the same body, that we are cherished by the same Spirit, fed by the same word and means of grace, until we shall all have grown together into that perfect form which it is intended that we shall attain. Let it never be forgotten, that the weakness of one member impairs the health of the whole body; and that if one member be strengthened, the whole body is invigorated. It is by the healthy action of every vessel in its proper office, that the vigour of the human constitution is sustained; and it is by the seasonable and appropriate exertion of every individual, according to the office which he

holds, and the grace which is given to him, that the ecclesiastical body must be consolidated in strength, and enlarged in size. This is the method, and it requires the constant attention of all who preach and all who hear, which Christ hath appointed for publishing the knowledge of religion with effect. It is in Christ, by obedience to his commandments, in prosecution of the methods which he has prescribed, and in faithful hope of his promises, that we can hope for any growing together, for any increase of the spiritual body; it is by the virtue which we derive from him, secretly diffused through the several members, and holding the several joints in firm connection with each other, that we can look for any permanent edification of the Church in love.

III. It is a common profession among Protestants, that an implicit deference is due to the sole authority of Christ in his Church, and that there is neither health nor strength which is not derived from him. The natural effect of this just persuasion will be, to lead us to reflect, and

form an earnest desire of following the prescribed method of enlarging the Christian body, by “speaking the truth in love.” The inquiry which is now drawing to a conclusion, bears too strong evidence that this method is not pursued, either as the interests of love or those of truth are concerned. In the supposed meridian light of Christian knowledge have been seen such instances of fanatical delirium, such credulous attention to the palpable impositions of a doating and deluded woman, such frantic zeal in the purchase and circulation of the most profane and impious parodies, as cannot be exceeded in the annals of religious perverseness and spiritual delusion. It is an occasion of the most melancholy reflection, that while Christians are contending one with another for particular articles of our holy faith, the truth and divine origin of our common salvation have been called in question, and the priests of THE TEMPLE OF REASON have awakened to new and mischievous activity. While we are debating the efficacy of the Christian Sacra-

ments, and the form and method of administering them, the command of the dying Saviour hath been overlooked, and his disciples have undertaken to judge for themselves, whether they shall or shall not observe the memorial of his death. Our attention has been distracted and withdrawn from points of high importance, and while we have been inventing or maintaining nice distinctions on the relative importance of faith and works, the principle of Antinomianism hath been publicly avowed, and the practices of an overwhelming luxury have threatened to demoralize the land. Under these circumstances it is necessary to retrace our steps, and to learn, if we would maintain or propagate the doctrines of the Gospel, to cultivate the spirit of unity and peace. It has been our endeavour to shew, that the doctrines of the Unitarian and the Calvinist, of the Romanist and the Dissenter, are at variance with the scriptural standard, and that the doctrines of our National Church are conformable with it. May it be allowed to speak the truth in love, and in the spirit of

reconciliation to inquire, whether the several denominations, which are more immediately opposed to each other than they are to the national Church, might not find it wisdom to acknowledge the several points on which they are agreed with us, and to bring their several differences into immediate collision with each other, and, forbearing all uncharitable insinuations, submit them to the arbitration of the Church, which might mediate with effect between them, and would rejoice in the signs of a conciliatory spirit, which such a contention for the truth in love would manifest.

1. Projects of conciliation have so often proved abortive as to alienate the minds of men from the contemplation of them, and to give to every new attempt an appearance of desperation. It is too seldom that they have been entertained in a cordial desire of establishing the truth in love, or of superseding mutual jealousies and misapprehensions; and too frequently have they been proposed in the form of a compromise, in which the one was jealous of surrendering what the other was instant in

demanding. Whether by a more equal and more efficient appropriation of our ecclesiastical revenues, and by a revision of our public formularies, in accommodation to the progress of religious knowledge, attempted in a spirit of pure unostentatious charity, the most venial prejudices of our dissenting brethren might not be softened; or whether it be indeed an inconvenient season for such moderate reformation, such peaceful endeavours to heal the divisions of the Church of Christ; are questions, which deserve at least a serious and dispassionate consideration. It is nevertheless, unhappily, more easy to state what are not, than what are the terms of conciliation. Men who speak the truth in love, are not prepared to acquiesce in denying the Lord who bought them; in a perverted doctrine of personal election; in a blind deference to human traditions; or in an unrestrained and unlimited right of private judgment. The only sure ground of conciliation among Protestants is, the acknowledged sufficiency of the Scriptures; and the more our doctrines are deduced

from this only source, and Protestants, in conformity with their ostensible professions, learn, according to the scriptural rule, to speak the truth in love, and to contend earnestly “for the faith delivered to the “saints,” the more clear and the more definite will be the promise of ecclesiastical union. When men are content to draw their belief from the pure streams, and to examine the scriptural authenticity of a doctrine, rather than to argue on its reasonableness and probability, they will “grow up into Christ,” and the disjointed members of the Christian body will be reunited and combined in truth and love. They will cease to inquire whether Christ is God, and submit to the authority which has decided, that he is “God,” even “the “true Godg.” They will not contend for a personal election, against the uniform testimony, that Christ is “a propitiation “for our sins; and not for ours only, but “for those of the whole world^h.” They will not uphold the expedience of an uni-

^g John i. 1. Rom. ix. 5. ^h 1 John v. 20. ^h 1 John ii. 2.

versal Father, in opposition to him who hath taught them to acknowledge no man their master or father upon earthⁱ. They will not deny the possibility of Christian unity, but follow the Apostle's exhortation, and earnestly endeavour to keep it. Is it impossible, that under the same influence the love of pleasure may be discountenanced, and the "form of godliness" be rendered subservient to its power; that such settled *principles* of faith may be inculcated, as shall produce consistent *habits* of righteousness, and that a practical sense of religion shall preclude the presumptuous imputations of hypocrisy, and restrain the indiscretions of an eccentric zeal? These will be the natural fruits of the efficacy of scriptural doctrine; and Christian men, not pretending to wisdom beyond that which is written, will hold fast the grand articles of their Christian belief, and follow the prescribed method of propagating them, and, "speaking the truth in love, will grow up in all things into him who is the head, even Christ."

ⁱ Matt. xxiii. 8—12.

2. If they, who profess and call themselves Christians, are indifferent to this rule, and to the practice which it enjoins, it will be in vain to think of “speaking the truth in love” to the Mahometan, the Heathen, and the Jew. The unconverted nations will shrewdly inquire for the truth and the love of those who are divided under different masters, without dependence upon the authority of Christ. If ever the Church shall be enlarged, and it is our Christian duty to labour and pray, and our consolation to hope, that it may be enlarged even to the comprehension of all nations, its enlargement must be effected by speaking the truth in love, by delivering the faith and the morality which Christ hath taught, and by adhering to the ordinances and forms of ministry which he hath appointed. The Scriptures rightly explained and interpreted must be the chief, if not the only standard of the Missionary’s appeal, from which he deduces the purity of an apostolical faith, and the order of an apostolical ministry. Whatever doctrine or discipline is of human invention he will cautiously suppress,

nor perplex the minds of the simple with the speculations of the controversialist. The love of the reconciling Father, the mediation and death of the propitiating Son, the unrestricted offer of the sanctifying Spirit, the benefits of the Gospel freely offered to all the world through an authorized ministry, to whom the word of reconciliation is committed; repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and preparation for judgment to come, will be the topics on which the Missionary will insist, and which the Heathen will not refuse to hear. The pure Gospel will always bear witness to itself, and will not fail to interest the hearer, when it is preached in simplicity and truth. That in modern times it has failed is a fact which cannot be denied, and the failure must be attributed to the general weakness and indiscretion, to the fanaticism and the superstition of those, to whom, with some few honourable exceptions, the work has been committed. The recent enlargement and renewed exertions of an efficient and comprehensive society, under episcopal sanction, for conveying the

knowledge of the Gospel throughout our colonies, and for the religious instruction of those in the east and the west, and in the southern continents of Africa, who have been intrusted to our care, have been long wanting, and further supineness in the promotion of its objects may defeat the designs of Providence, and eventually hazard the safety of our colonial power.

3. The times in which we live are not deficient in a zeal for godliness; but this zeal is accompanied with so many little bickerings and jealousies, as to render it every day more difficult and unpopular to speak “the truth in love,” and to endeavour “in all things to grow up into Christ.” The young theologian has no means of resisting these temptations to manifold and prevailing error, unless he is actuated by an earnest conviction of the importance of “speaking the truth in love,” and by a steady desire of improving this conviction by ascertaining and delivering the true sense of the Scriptures, and by keeping “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

They who hear me are members of a

Church which acknowledges “ the sufficiency of the holy Scriptures;” which requires nothing to “ be believed as an article of faith,” which “ is not read therein, “ nor may be proved thereby^k;” which suffers not the Church as a body “ to ordain any thing which is contrary to God’s “ word written,” nor to “ expound one “ place of Scripture that it be repugnant “ to another,” nor “ to decree any thing “ against the same,” nor “ besides the “ same^l;” or of which it may not be declared, that it “ is taken out of holy Scripture^m :” and which requires of her ministers a persuasion “ that the holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation “ through faith in Jesus Christ,” with a determination “ out of the said Scripture to “ instruct the people committed to *their* “ charge, and to teach nothing as required “ of necessity to eternal salvation, but that “ which *they* shall be persuaded may be “ concluded and proved by the holy Scrip-

^k Art. VI. ^l Art. XX. ^m Art. XXI.

“tureⁿ.” By the provision which is made for the daily reading of the Scripture, and by the prevailing mode of educating youth in the principles of the Established Church, it is hardly possible that men will long remain in ignorance of scriptural doctrines and scriptural expressions. There is also in this place peculiar encouragement given to the study of the sacred Writings, by making a competent knowledge of them indispensable to the attainment of the lowest degree of academical honour. These are strong motives to excel in scriptural learning, without which we cannot fulfil the character which our Church supposes her ministers to possess; without which we cannot only not preach with effect and authority to the people, but shall expose ourselves to the scorn and derision of the very meanest of our congregations. A judicious use of scriptural language and allusion will be the best ornament of our discourses, and command with most certainty the attention of the people; and if it be necessary to

ⁿ Office of Ordering of Priests.

confute any error, to maintain any truth, or enforce any precept, the object will be accomplished most popularly in the language of the Scriptures, applied correctly, and explained with precision.

It is our office not only to preach but to interpret the holy Scriptures, to elucidate the obscurities of a volume of difficult interpretation, and to remove the doubts which may arise from the perversion of it. To this end it is necessary that we should attend to the scope and object of the sacred writers in their several arguments, that we should compare the text with the context and with the parallel passages, and that we should mark the peculiar idiom and construction of the original language, and seek the meaning which the words bore in the minds of those who wrote them. The scribe who will undertake this patience of investigation will seldom fail of speaking the truth, and extricating himself from the cunning craftiness of the designing. The sophistry in which the Socinian involves the redemption and atonement, the Calvinist the state of salvation, the Papist the

authority of tradition, and the Sectary the forms of ministerial order, will not succeed, where there is an acquaintance with scriptural manners, scriptural arguments; and scriptural criticism.

If there be many, by whom this desirable preparation can neither be attained nor employed, there are none exempt from the duty of “speaking the truth in love.” It is one part of the ministerial office “to watch “for souls;” and an earnest interest in the salvation of all men will lead us, both in our conduct and conversation, to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and to give “no offence, that the ministry may not “be blamed.” The same love will produce an exemplary spirit of piety, charity, and moderation; of ministerial earnestness, patience, and perseverance; of boldness in the rebuke of vice; of affectionate kindness in the consolation of the penitent and faithful; of discretion in guiding the ignorant; and of meekness in “instructing those that “oppose themselves.” This will be the love of a pastor to his flock, which he will con-

sider as a small portion of the Christian Church, with which he will labour to consolidate it in the purity of a scriptural faith, and in the strength and firmness of an apostolical order and ministry. In the same spirit and love of unity, he will submit himself to the lawful authority of his ecclesiastical governors, and will live with his ministerial brethren in the intercourse of mutual kindness, “striving together with them for the truth of the Gospel,” co-operating with them in all measures which promise peace and edification, and scrupulously abstaining from every practice of an opposite tendency. He will consider the Church of England as a sound member of the Universal Church, and will rejoice in its prosperity, from a conviction that her prosperity is edifying to the whole Christian family. In his desire of Christian unity, he will avoid and discountenance all doubtful disputations; and knowing that, as peace and security are the end of war, the establishment of the truth in love is the only end of religious controversy, he will accelerate the attainment of his object, by abstaining from all personal insinuations, by

not misrepresenting the meaning of an author, and by ascertaining the sense of the Scriptures on the subject in dispute. It was with this view that these Lectures were prepared; and the chief design of preparing them will be answered, if they shall lead the advocates of error to pause, and reflect upon their mutual extravagancies and contradictions; if they shall lead the vicious and the thoughtless to reformation and repentance; if they shall dispose the heart of any man to the love of virtue, peace, unity, and truth; if they shall convince any man of the alarming progress of religious error, and invite new champions to reform our corrupted manners, and to “contend earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints.”

With this faith, as it is delivered in the holy Scriptures, it does not appear possible to reconcile either the heresies of the Socinian, the perversions of the Calvinist, the apostasies of the Romanist, the divisions of the Dissenter, or any of the love of pleasure and form of godliness which distinguish a frivolous, luxurious, and very presuming age. But it is consistent with the earnest-

ness of contending for this faith, to uphold the edifying influence of a Church, which, whatever be her blemishes and defects, founds her professions of faith, her moral and political maxims, and her forms of ecclesiastical polity, on the authority of apostolical precedents and apostolical precepts.

The purpose of the pious founder of these Lectures was the establishment of true, and the suppression of erroneous doctrine. May it appear that these ends have not been overlooked in the present series, and that nothing hath been said to the prejudice of the truth in love! May the errors which have been exhibited only attract the notice of my younger brethren, that they may avoid them; and may it confirm their faith to know, that their origin and progress are but the fulfilment of prophecy! May they be dissuaded from the weakness and credulity of believing "every spirit," and encouraged to a manly examination of "the spirits, whether they are of God"! May they be preserved from "damnable heresies," and love "the Lord who bought them"! May they walk in the straight paths, and avoid all perverted doctrines!

May they shun every apostasy, and not “depart” from the purity of a scriptural faith! May they be “approved” in resisting the heresies which shall arise; and may they unite the “form” with “the power” of godliness, and not suffer the love of pleasure to weaken the love of God! When they have had patience to “prove all things,” may they have steadfastness to “hold fast “that which is good;” and learn so to “speak the truth in love, that they may in “all things grow up into him who is the “head, even Christ!”

“Now the God of peace, that brought “again from the dead our Lord Jesus, “that great Shepherd of the sheep, through “the blood of the everlasting covenant, “make you perfect in every good work to “do his will, working in you that which is “well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus “Christ; to whom be glory for ever and “ever. Amen^p.”

^p Heb. xiii. 21, 22.

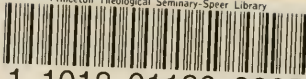
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